

Press Release: March 14, 2013
Center for the Study of Local Issues
Anne Arundel Community College
101 College Parkway, Arnold MD, 21012-1895
Contact: Dan Nataf 410-777-2733

Top Priority for County Executive, State and Local Policies Focus of Anne Arundel County Survey

A survey of 420 Anne Arundel County residents conducted March 4-7 by students assisting the Center for the Study of Local Issues (CSLI) at Anne Arundel Community College focused primarily on the top priority for the newly appointed county executive, support for a variety of state and local policies, perceptions of the local economy and its impact upon residents, and emergency communication preferences. A detailed review of these main themes as well as other results follows the summary of findings. The actual questionnaire and percentages can be found in Appendix A at the end of the press release.

Summary of Findings

A summary of issues covered by the CSLI survey is presented below.

Top priority for newly appointed county executive: 20 percent mentioned improved governance and ethics. Other frequently mentioned improvements involved the economy, taxes, the budget, education, transportation and the environment.

Most important problem facing county residents: 23 percent cited the economy, a 25 point drop since October 2011.

Perceptions of the economy: 49 percent viewed the county's economy as excellent or good – essentially unchanged from last fall when it was 48 percent; 30 percent said the same for Maryland's economy (down 3 points) and 12 percent favorably rated the national economy, down 4 points.

Right direction/wrong direction: The percentage of those saying that the county was moving in the right direction was largely unchanged (from 50 to 49 percent). Smaller numbers felt that the state (35 percent) or the country (24 percent) was heading in the right direction. Individuals generally felt that they themselves were headed in the right direction (74 percent).

Economic conditions experienced by individuals: Various measures have been tracked since March 2008. The spring 2013 survey found a mixed pattern: losses in stocks or retirement accounts reached the lowest point since CSLI began polling on this item. There were minor positive changes in affordability of transportation and utilities as well. Respondents seemed slightly more likely to have received an increase in income or found a new or better job recently. Negative changes were highlighted by a sharp rise in the percentage saying that they were “facing the possibility of unemployment” which rose from 14 to 19 percent.

Consumer confidence: Indicators pointed to a drop in consumer confidence, led by respondents' 12 month forecasts about employment (down 35) points and growth (down 19 points).

Emergency communications: A majority of county residents have been contacted about a crime, weather event or other emergency; only 35 percent knew that such emergency communications have been by the Code Red system. The most preferred method of communicating such emergencies was via landline telephone.

State and local policies: The public was inclined to support the following policies: fingerprinting of handgun purchasers (78 percent supporting); requiring handgun purchasers to complete a safety course

prior to purchase; and providing curbside composting pickup. A majority opposed repealing the death penalty and replacing it with life without the possibility of parole; expanding wind power financed by a \$1.50 per month fee on BGE customers; paying \$85 to pay for storm water management and Bay cleanup; allowing charter schools to tap into the same construction funding for building facilities as that used by regular public schools; and, allowing counties to increase the sales tax on gasoline to improve roads.

Obama's job approval: President Obama's job approval was unchanged at 44 percent.

Obama's top priority: The main line of cleavage was among those who focused on the economy and jobs (40 percent) and those emphasizing spending, the federal budget, taxation and debt (32 percent).

Which party do you trust? The percentage favoring Democrats was slightly greater (37 percent) to that favoring Republicans (32 percent) with a large number (26 percent) saying "neither."

Retirement planning and age: Asked "how important is retirement planning to you at this point in your life" nearly two-thirds (62 percent) said "very important." The modal age for likely retirement was 65 years old.

Methodology: The survey polled a random sample of 420 county residents who were at least 18 years old. It was conducted March 4, 5, and 7, 2013 during evening hours. Phone numbers were derived from a database of listed landline numbers as well as computer chosen, randomly assigned numbers. There was about a 4.8 percent statistical margin of error for the overall sample; the error rate was higher for subgroups such as "Democrats." The dataset was weighted by gender and political party to better represent the general population. College students were trained and used as telephone interviewers.

Contact Dan Nataf, Ph.D., center director, for additional comments or questions at 410-777-2733 and ddnataf@aacc.edu. Check the CSLI website for results from this and previous surveys: www2.aacc.edu/csl.

Top Priority for the County Executive

The spring 2013 survey asked the open-ended question, “What should be the top priority of the newly appointed county executive in terms of improving the county during the period until elections in 2014?” Table 1 summarizes the results. The most cited element was an improvement in the functioning of county government from a leadership and ethical perspective. A variety of policy improvements were also mentioned, such as balancing or controlling budgets, lowering taxes, improving schools, protecting the environment, road repair, limits to growth, increasing jobs and helping the economy.

Table 1: Top Priority for County Executive

	Percent Citing	Examples
Non-policy		
Institutional improvements	20	“Change the way the county has been run,” “Clean house,” “Build citizen confidence in government,” “Pay more attention to details,” “Avoid scandal troubles,” “Deal with corruption,” “Ethics/ethical governance,” “Honesty and awareness of what is going on”
Personal improvements	2	“Improving her experience,” “Get more familiar with the county,” “Increase visibility to the public”
Efficiency Improvements	2	“Streamline government,” “Analyze the efficiency of county government”
Policy		
Economy	15	“Jobs,” “Help small businesses,” “Jobs for young people and college students,” “Promoting businesses”
Education	12	“Maintain school funding,” “Build more/better schools,” “Make schools secure,” “Help education”
Budget	10	“Fiscal management,” “Get rid of excess spending,” “Control government expenditures,” “Stop inefficient spending”
Taxes	10	“Get a handle on taxes,” “Lower taxes,” “Change the tax cap to raise taxes,” “Lower property taxes”
Transportation	5	“Fix county roads,” “Deal with traffic congestion”
Environment	3	“Clean up the Bay,” “Take care of natural resources,” “Deal with run-off”
Service improvements	3	“Improve police and emergency services staffing,” “Increase teacher pay,” “Upgrade county technology,” “Improve services for the disabled”
Growth	2	“Stop excess development,” “Overpopulation”
Crime	2	“Lower crime,” “Better police protection,” “Improve public safety”
Other policy improvements	7	“Gun control,” “Healthcare,” “Gas prices,” “More frequent trash pickup,” “Improve housing”
General comments	2	“Think of the general welfare of the county,” “Move the county in a positive direction”
Unsure	4	
Total	99	

Note: All values in tables are percentages unless otherwise indicated. Totals may not be 100 percent due to rounding.

The Economy

The Most Important Problem facing Residents

Recent CSLI surveys have consistently shown high levels of concern about the state of the economy in answer to the question, “What is the most important problem facing the residents of Anne Arundel County at the present time?” In this as with some other questions, an improving economic climate was signaled by the continuing decline in the percentage mentioning the economy (23 percent), down 7 percentage points from one year ago.

This spring’s survey saw minor change in the percentage citing high taxes (up from 17 to 19 percent). There was no change in the percentage mentioning government as corrupt or unethical - 6 percent.¹

Table 2: “Most Important Problem facing Residents” – Fall 2007 to Spring 2013²

	Fall '07	Spring '08	Fall '08	Spring '09	Fall '09	Spring '10	Fall '10	Spring '11	Fall '11	Spring '12	Fall '12	Spring '13
Economy	8	23	38	48	33	36	36	35	48	30	27	23
Taxes – too high	17	16	12	10	12	11	13	11	9	17	17	19
Growth / development	16	12	9	5	5	5	2	4	4	4	3	2
Education / school problems	12	12	10	8	7	8	9	10	5	7	8	8
Traffic congestion/problems	12	7	6	4	5	6	6	3	5	5	6	5
Crime / drugs	10	6	4	6	8	6	6	6	8	4	7	5
Unsure/no answer	6	9	7	8	10	10	8	12	8	9	9	10
Other answer	19	15	14	11	21	17	21	19	13	24	23	29
Total	100	100	100	100	101	99	101	100	100	100	100	101

Note: In this and other tables, totals may not equal 100 percent due to rounding.

Rating Economic Conditions – Anne Arundel County

Since March 2002, the CSLI semi-annual survey has asked a benchmark question about the economy: “How would you rate economic conditions in Anne Arundel County – ‘excellent,’ ‘good,’ ‘only fair’ or ‘poor?’ ”

As shown on Table 2.1, since March 2007 the county’s historical average saying that the economy was a combined “excellent” or “good” was 52 percent. Since spring 2010, a growing percentage had said that the county economy was excellent or good, peaking spring 2012 at 51 percent. This spring, the percentage continued below the spring 2012 peak at 49 percent. Graph 1 also displays the overall trend from spring 2006 to the latest survey in spring 2013.

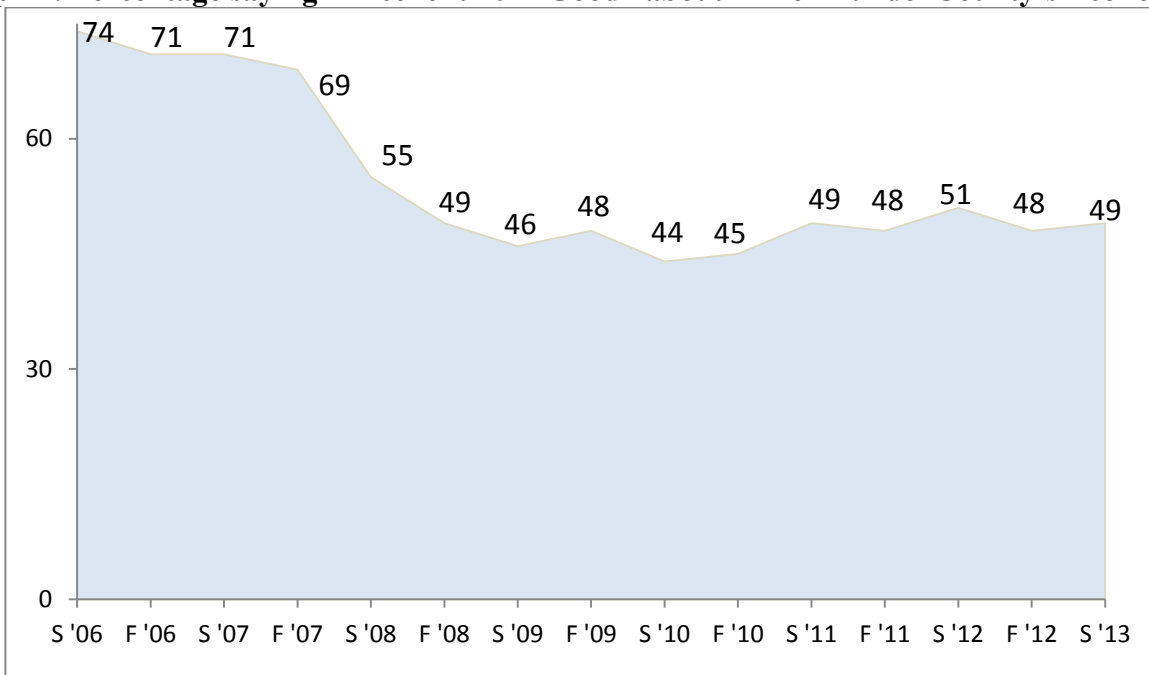
¹ A variety of items are included in the “other answer” category including government corrupt/unethical, government wasteful or inefficient (5 percent cited), government lacks resources (2 percent), environment (3 percent), healthcare (1 percent) as well as other random answers.

² From spring 2007 to spring 2010, surveys’ answer categories for “most important problem” included “lack of affordable housing” for interviewers to check off. Previously, that answer to the open-ended question would have been categorized under “economy” a practice which was resumed in fall 2010. The running totals in Table 1 combine both answers into the single “Economy” category. Similarly, crime includes those saying “crime” and “illegal drugs.”

Table 2.1: Perceptions of County Economic Conditions

Condition	Spring '07	Fall '07	Spring '08	Fall '08	Spring '09	Fall '09	Spring '10	Fall '10	Spring '11	Fall '11	Spring '12	Fall '12	Spring, '13	Mean
Excellent +good	71	69	55	49	46	48	44	45	49	48	51	48	49	52
Excellent	12	10	6	6	2	4	3	3	3	4	2	5	3	5
Good	59	59	49	43	44	44	41	42	46	44	49	43	46	47
Fair	22	25	36	37	43	38	41	45	38	40	37	39	38	37
Poor	4	5	8	12	10	11	13	8	12	11	11	12	11	10
Don't know	3	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	1	2	3	2
Total	100	101	101	100	101	100	100	100	101	101	100	101	101	101

Graph 1: Percentage saying “Excellent” or “Good” about Anne Arundel County’s Economy



Rating Economic Conditions – Maryland and the National Economy

Since spring 2009, the question about rating economic conditions has been extended to the state of Maryland and the country overall.

Regarding the state of Maryland, Table 3 shows continuing erosion in positive perceptions – the current combined ‘excellent/good’ scores have descended to a value similar to fall 2009, when the economic crisis was still fresh. While the survey did not directly ask about the impact of the ‘sequester’ it seems plausible that Maryland’s strong dependency on federal employment and contracting may be contributing to this perception.

Table 3: Perceptions of State Economic Conditions

Condition	Spring '09	Fall '09	Spring '10	Fall '10	Spring '11	Fall '11	Spring '12	Fall '12	Spring '13
Excellent+good	27	30	31	32	35	33	38	33	30
Excellent	1	2	2	1	3	1	4	3	1
Good	26	28	29	31	32	32	34	30	29
Fair	49	45	46	47	43	41	40	42	41
Poor	22	21	21	19	21	24	21	23	24
Don't know	2	4	2	2	1	2	2	2	4
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	101	100	99

Regarding the national economy, residents have not been very positive in their views; the spring survey showed a 4 point drop in the 'excellent/good' score (12 percent). The national mood as measured by the Gallup polling organization offered a bit more optimistic (18 percent), but generally the Gallup and CSLI results have tracked quite closely.³

Table 4: Perceptions of National Economic Conditions

Condition	Spring '09	Fall '09	Spring '10	Fall '10	Spring '11	Fall '11	Spring '12	Fall '12	Spring '13
Excellent+Good	5	11	11	11	11	9	13	16	12
Excellent	0	1	1	2	2	2	1	2	2
Good	5	10	10	9	9	7	12	14	10
Fair	30	39	42	41	43	28	47	37	38
Poor	63	48	46	47	45	62	39	46	47
Don't know	1	2	2	1	2	2	2	1	3
Total	99	100	101	100	101	101	101	100	100

Economic Conditions Applying to Respondents

Respondents were asked: "Thinking about your personal circumstances, please tell me whether any of these economic conditions apply to you or your household." Table 5 shows the results for the last ten CSLI surveys. The fall 2011 survey added two new questions asking about a "salary increase or other increase in income recently" and whether the respondent had "found a new or better job recently"; both questions were continued in spring 2013.

³ See <http://www.gallup.com/poll/110821/gallup-daily-us-economic-conditions.aspx> for Gallup's running totals for this question.

Table 5: Economic Conditions Applying to Personal Circumstances

Condition	Fall '08	Spring '09	Fall '09	Spring '10	Fall '10	Spring '11	Fall '11	Spring '12	Fall '12	Spring '13	Spring '13- Fall '12
Significant losses in your stock or retirement accounts	71	75	70	56	60	52	60	44	38	32	-6
Hard to afford cost of transportation	32	21	17	21	24	41	30	36	30	27	-3
Hard to afford cost of utilities such as electricity or gas	50	53	42	44	43	46	39	39	32	31	-1
Taxes are too high in relation to the govt. services provided	58	59	59	63	60	63	58	63	63	62	-1
Received a salary increase or other increase in income recently	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	26	35	31	34	+3
Found a new or better job recently	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	14	16	11	14	+3
Wages or salaries are not rising as fast as the cost of living	59	55	55	56	56	63	59	66	59	59	0
Facing the possibility of unemployment	15	24	24	19	21	20	21	17	14	19	+5
Health care insurance is unavailable, too expensive or inadequate	30	29	33	32	34	35	32	32	27	32	+5
Delay in making a major purchase such as a home or car	n.a.	51	46	47	44	47	51	45	38	42	+4
Facing the possibility of house foreclosure or loss	4	6	8	7	7	9	8	8	4	7	+3
Unable to find affordable housing	11	12	13	15	10	14	11	15	9	12	+3

Table 5 is organized to place possible positive experiences near the top and negative experiences near the bottom with the right column revealing changes from fall 2012 to spring 2013.

The major positive news was that losses in stocks or retirement accounts reached the lowest point since CSLI began polling on this item: 32 percent said it applied. There were minor positive changes in affordability of transportation and utilities as well. Respondents seemed slightly more likely to have received an increase in income or found a new or better job recently.

The negative news seems highlighted especially by the sharp rise in the percentage saying that they were “facing the possibility of unemployment” or had problems accessing healthcare. There were lesser concerns expressed about housing foreclosure or affordability. Overall, the economic picture was mixed, but clearly with warning signs about the future.

Consumer Confidence

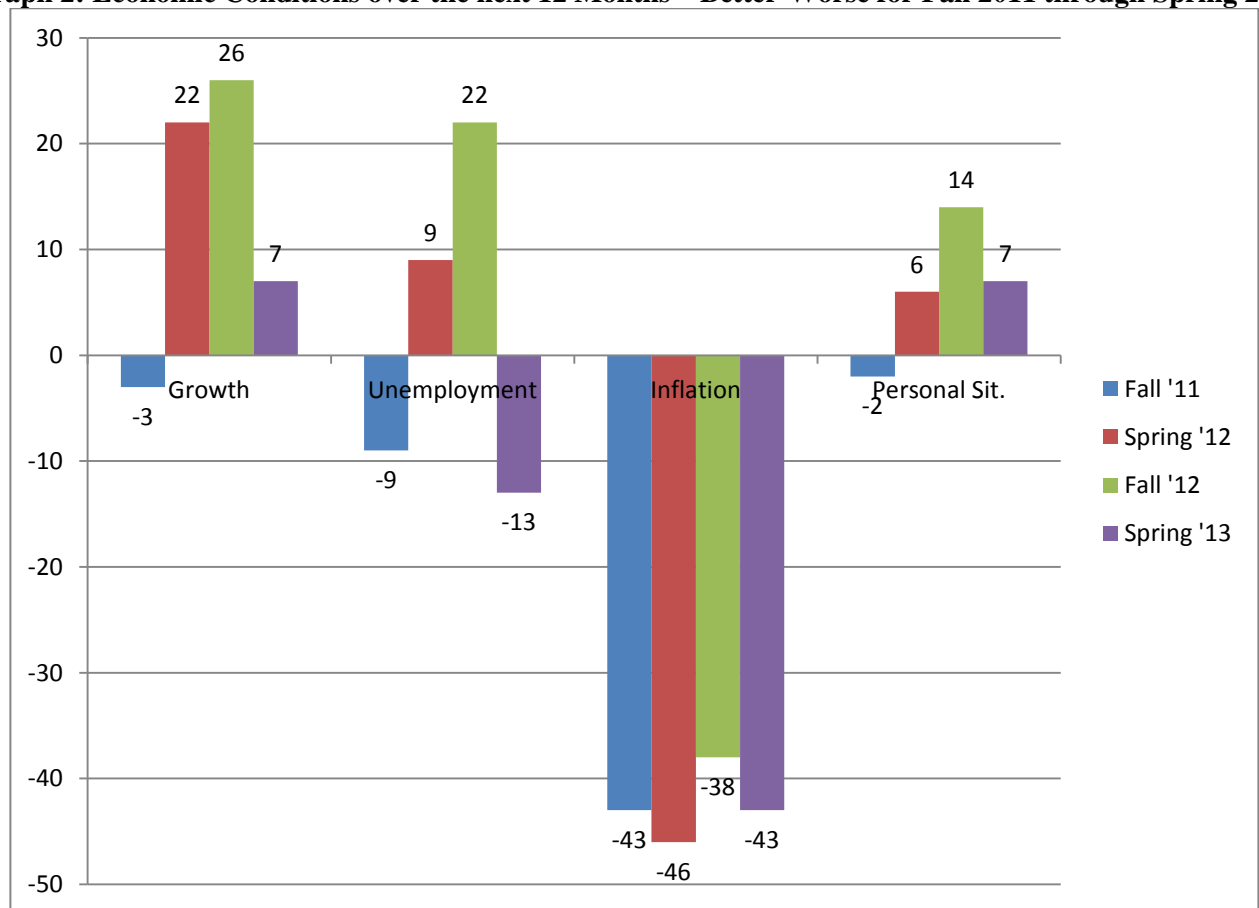
Since fall 2011, four questions have been used to measure the public’s confidence in the future of the economy. These questions reference economic growth, unemployment, inflation and the respondent’s personal financial situation, asking the respondent to think about the next 12 months and say whether a particular condition will be better, the same or worse. Table 6 shows the results just for spring 2013; Graph 2 shows the results since fall 2011, calculated by subtracting the value of “worse” from the value of “better” (with a higher number indicating economic optimism).

Graph 2 shows that a previous positive trend was largely reversed this spring. In keeping with conclusions from the previous section, since last fall optimism about employment dropped 35 points; growth dropped 19 points. By contrast, there was only a 7 point drop in personal situation.

Table 6: Economic Conditions over the next 12 Months

	Better	Same	Worse	Unsure/NA	Total
Economic growth	31	39	24	6	100
Unemployment	24	32	37	7	100
Inflation	9	32	52	8	101
Your personal financial situation	23	58	16	4	101

Graph 2: Economic Conditions over the next 12 Months – Better-Worse for Fall 2011 through Spring 2013



Retirement Planning and Age

The spring 2013 survey asked how “important is retirement planning to you at this point in your life?” A large majority (62 percent) said “very important.” Table 6.1 shows the percentage of respondents in different age groups and the percentage saying “very important.” The statistically significant ($p > .01$) relationship shows that individuals’ concern with retirement planning peaks during the years 40-60, ebbing as they reach 65. Asked about likely retirement age, 28 percent said 62 years or less, 31 percent said between 63 and 65, 28 percent said between 66 and 70, with the remainder (12 percent) saying over 70.

Table 6.1: Age Groups and Retirement Planning

Age Group	% Very important
18-30	46
31-40	41
41-50	75
51-60	71
61-65	67
66 and over	50
Overall	62

Emergency Communications

The spring 2013 survey had a section devoted to emergency communications between the county and residents. When asked whether “the county (has) ever contacted you by landline about a crime, weather event, or other emergency,” a majority (54 percent) said “yes.” Only about one-third (35 percent) were aware of the Code Red emergency notification system used by the county. A smaller group (14 percent) had signed up to receive emergency notifications by cell phone, text message or email, with only 10 percent having actually received a notification using such methods.

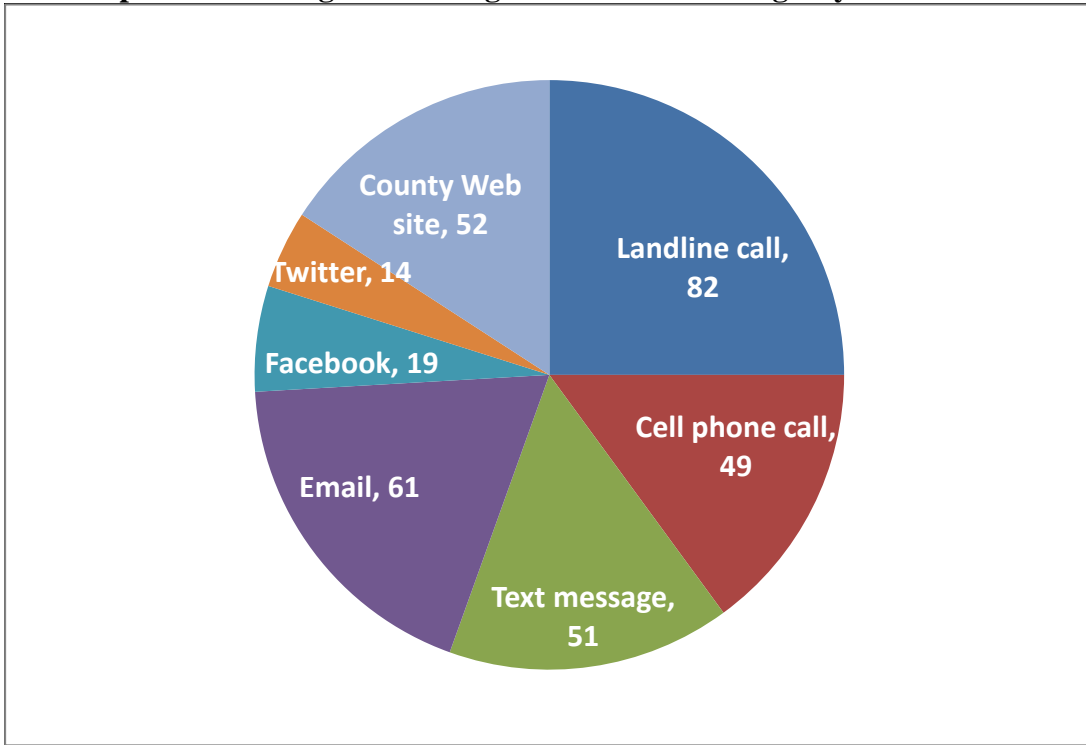
Table 7 (and Graph 3) shows that these respondents favored landline calls over other methods.⁴

Table 7: Percentage Preferring a Method for Emergency Communications

Method	Favor	Oppose	Unsure	No answer
Landline call	82	15	2	0
Email	61	36	2	1
County Web site	52	42	2	3
Text message	51	46	2	1
Cell phone call	49	48	2	1
Facebook	19	74	3	4
Twitter	14	79	3	5

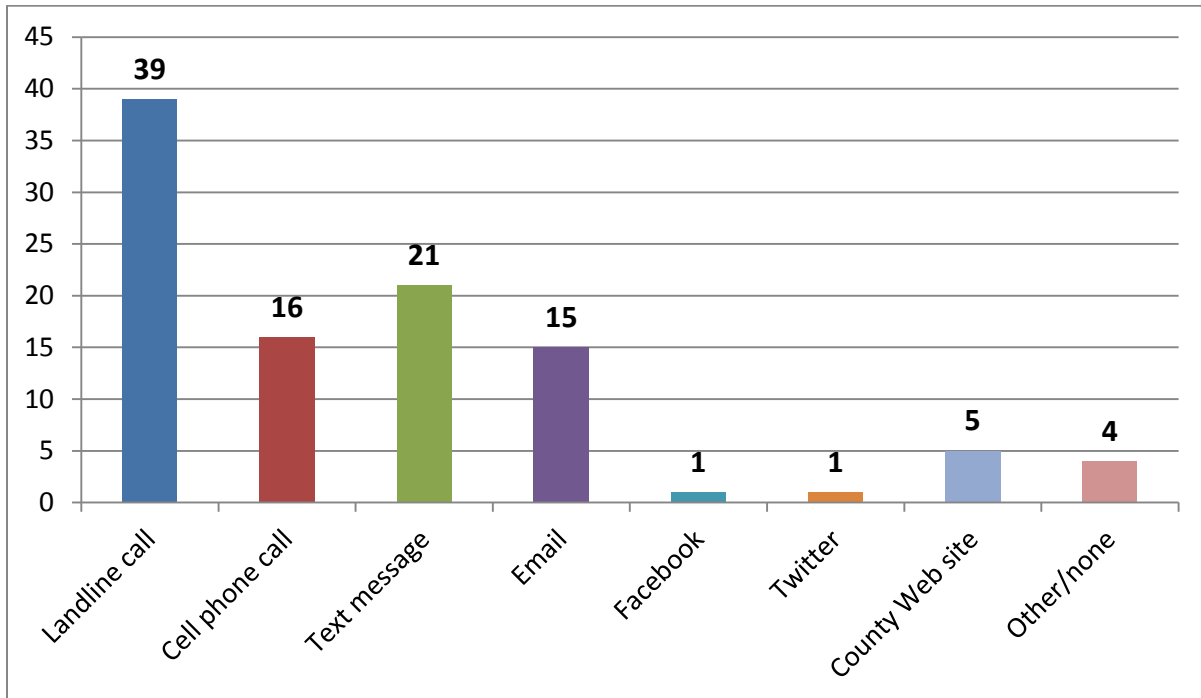
⁴ Respondents were selected based on mostly listed landline telephone numbers, perhaps biasing the preference towards landlines somewhat.

Graph 3: Percentage Preferring a Method for Emergency Communications



When asked, “Which method do you think would work best for you?,” there was still a general preference for landlines (39 percent) over other methods such as text messaging (21 percent), cell phones (16 percent) or email (15 percent). Graph 4 illustrates these differences.

Graph 4: Percentage Selecting a Method which would Work Best



State and Local Issues

As shown on Table 8, a variety of state and local proposals were presented to respondents in the spring 2013 survey. Several dealt with gun control legislation. Strong majorities favored fingerprinting of handgun purchasers (78 percent) and requiring such purchasers to complete a safety course prior to purchase (82 percent). There was a more even division regarding whether those seeking to purchase a handgun should pay a \$100 fee at the time of purchase (45 percent).

A majority opposed (52 percent) the repeal of the death penalty and replacing it with life without the possibility of parole. Republicans (28 percent said “support”) and unaffiliated respondents (35 percent) were the least likely to support the proposal; Democrats (50 percent) and especially liberals (64 percent) were most likely to support it.

Table 8: Percentage Supporting or Opposing Various State and Local Proposals

	Support	Oppose	Unsure	No answer
Repealing the death penalty and replacing it with life without the possibility of parole	39	52	7	2
Having those seeking to purchase a handgun pay a \$100 fee at the time of purchase	45	49	4	2
Having handgun purchasers be fingerprinted at the time of purchase	78	19	3	0
Having handgun purchasers be required to complete a safety course prior to purchase	82	16	2	0
Expanding wind energy financed by a monthly \$1.50 fee on residential BGE customers	43	53	4	0
Paying an annual fee of \$85 to help pay for storm water management and Bay clean-up	36	61	2	1
Providing curbside composting pickup	66	27	5	2
Allowing county charter schools tap into the same construction funding for building facilities currently used by regular public schools	39	51	9	1
Allowing counties to increase the sales tax on gasoline sales to improve roads.	21	77	3	0

Expansion of wind energy only gained the support of 43 percent of the respondents. There was even less enthusiasm (36 percent saying “support”) for an annual \$85 fee dedicated to storm water management and clean-up of the Chesapeake Bay. A measure to provide curbside composting pickup managed to gain the support of 66 percent of the sample.

A proposal to have charter schools tap into the same pool of construction funds as regular public schools was supported by 39 percent.

Obtaining the lowest level of support was a proposal to allow counties to increase the sales tax on gasoline sales (21 percent).

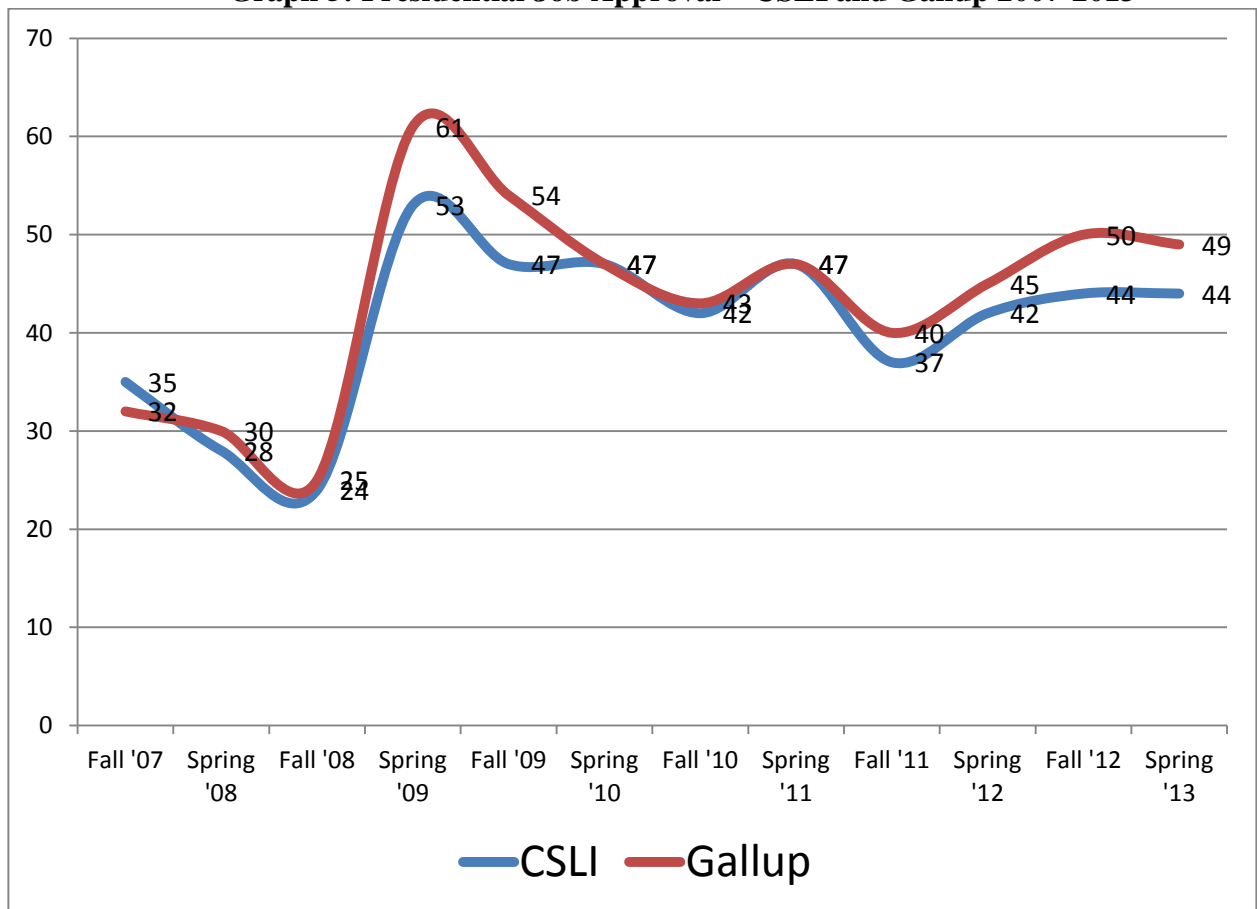
Presidential Job Approval

Since fall 2007, CSLI polls of county residents have closely tracked national presidential job approval trends as indicated by Gallup surveys.⁵ For the period closest to that during which CSLI was calling residents, Gallup’s presidential job approval surveys conducted March 6-8 indicated that 49 percent approved of the president’s performance. CSLI’s own polling revealed a percentage that was somewhat lower: 44 percent (see Table 9 and Graph 5), replicating the results from last fall. That finding is consistent with a tendency for President Obama’s job approval in Anne Arundel County to run a few points lower than in the country as a whole.

Table 9: Job Approval for Presidents Bush and Obama

Issue	Fall 2007	Spring 2008	Fall 2008	Spring 2009	Fall 2009	Spring 2010	Fall 2010	Spring 2011	Fall 2011	Spring 2012	Fall 2012	Spring 2013
Approve	35	28	24	53	47	47	42	47	37	42	44	44
Disapprove	57	62	69	31	42	45	49	44	56	49	50	51
No answer	9	10	8	16	11	8	10	9	7	8	6	4
Total	101	100	101	100	100	100	101	100	100	99	100	99

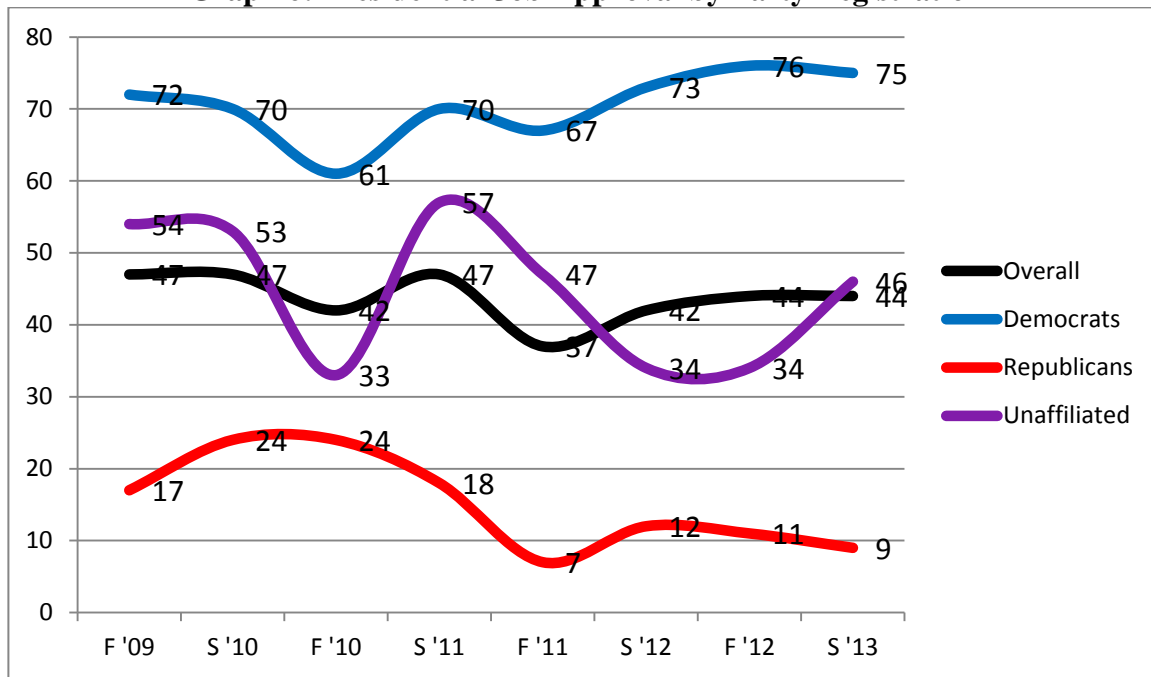
Graph 5: Presidential Job Approval – CSLI and Gallup 2007-2013



⁵ See <http://www.gallup.com/poll/113980/gallup-daily-obama-job-approval.aspx> for findings cited here. All respondents were included in job approval calculations, not just likely voters.

As seen on Graph 6, Obama’s popularity among Democrats was essentially unchanged from last fall. There was some drop in support among Republicans (from 11 to 9 percent). Unaffiliated voters showed greater approval moving from 34 percent last fall to 44 percent this spring.⁶

Graph 6: Presidential Job Approval by Party Registration



President’s Top Priority

The survey asked an open-ended question, “What should be the top priority of President Obama as he starts his second term of office?” The main split was between those who felt that the economy and jobs were main priorities (40 percent) and those focusing on the budget/spending/deficits/taxes (32 percent). Another 7 percent felt that compromise and working with Congress was a top priority. Foreign policy (including ending foreign wars) was also 7 percent, as were other domestic policies such as gun control or healthcare.

Table 9.1: Obama’s Top Priority

Priority	Percentage
Spending	6
Budget	16
Taxes	4
Debt/deficit	6
Bipartisanship/work with Congress	7
Economy	24
Jobs	15
End foreign wars	4
Domestic policies – other	7
Foreign policies - other	3
Misc.	8
Total	100

⁶ The number of unaffiliated voters is quite small; any estimates for this group are subject to much larger margins of error.

Trust in Political Parties

Since 2009, the CSLI survey has asked which party “do you trust to do a better job in coping with the main problems the nation faces over the next few years.” Table 10 shows Democrats unchanged from their spring score (37 percent), while the Republican score dropped six points to 32 percent. The “neither” option (which is volunteered without prompting by the respondent) shot up to 26 percent from 17 percent last fall.

Table 10: Which Party do you Trust?

	2008		2009		2010		2011		2012		2013
	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring
Democrats	42	37	33	34	37	37	34	31	37	37	37
Republicans	30	28	31	37	34	38	32	30	34	38	32
Neither	20	27	31	21	21	17	29	32	21	17	26
No opinion/other	8	7	6	8	7	9	4	7	7	9	4
Total	100	99	101	100	99	101	99	100	99	101	99

Other Findings

County – Right or Wrong Direction?

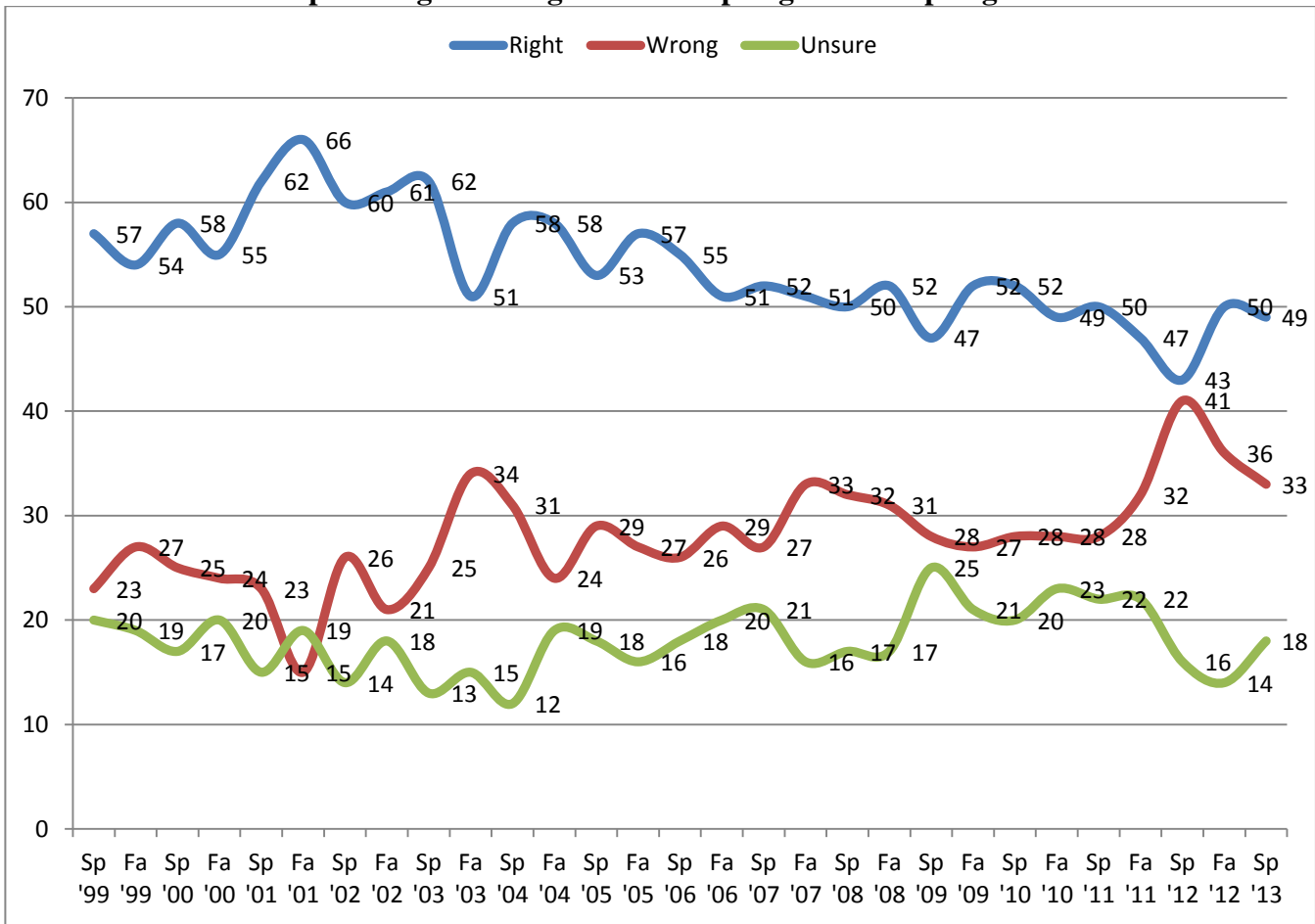
The survey included a CSLI benchmark question whose results are seen on Table 11 and Graph 7: “Overall, would you say that the county is headed in the right direction or in the wrong direction?”

Table 11 and Graph 7 show little change from fall 2012 to spring 2013. There was a slight reduction in the percentage saying “wrong” direction, resulting in a slightly more favorable “right-wrong” value of 16 percentage points (vs. 14 points last fall).

Table 11: Anne Arundel County - Right vs. Wrong Direction Fall 2009 to Spring 2013

Response	F '09	S '10	F '10	S '11	F '11	S '12	F '12	S '13	Average
Right direction	52	52	49	50	47	43	50	49	49
Wrong direction	27	28	28	28	32	41	36	33	32
Unsure	21	20	23	22	22	16	14	18	19
Right-wrong	25	24	21	22	15	2	14	16	17
Total	100	100	100	100	101	100	100	100	100

Graph 7: Right/Wrong Direction Spring 1999 to Spring 2013



The survey also asked individuals to indicate right/wrong views about the state, nation and themselves. Table 12 shows the results along with those for the county. The Gallup organization asks a similar question - “satisfaction about the way things are going in the country.” Its most recent finding (for February 18, 2013) showed that 27 percent of Americans were satisfied – just 3 percent more than the CSLI score for national “right direction.”⁷

Table 12: Right/Wrong Direction for County, State, Nation and Respondent

	Right	Wrong	Unsure/ Don't know
County	49	33	18
State	35	55	10
Nation	24	64	13
Respondent	74	14	12

Table 13 shows how the respondent’s party registration affected perceptions of other levels. Majorities of Democrats thought that the county and state but not the nation were going in the right direction; Republicans’ highest scores were for the county (38 percent) with very low scores for the state (12 percent)

⁷ See <http://www.gallup.com/poll/160598/democrats-push-satisfaction.aspx> for details about the Gallup poll. It also discusses historic patterns of satisfaction scores as these relate to previous presidential elections as well as demographic breakdowns.

and country (8 percent). There was only a two point difference between the percentages of Democrats saying that their personal circumstances were going in the “right direction” compared to Republicans.⁸

Table 13: Right/Wrong Direction – Party Registration by County, State, Nation, Individual

Levels	Dem.	Rep.	Dem-Rep.	Unaffiliated
County	58	38	20	50
State	54	12	32	37
Nation	38	8	30	27
Respondent	74	72	2	72

The values below the party labels indicate the percentages of those within each category who said “right direction” for the county, state, national and individual levels

Methodology

The survey polled a random sample of 420 county residents who were at least 18 years old. It was conducted March 4, 5, and 7, 2013 during evening hours. Phone numbers were derived from a database of listed landline numbers as well as computer chosen, randomly assigned numbers. There was about a 4.8 percent statistical margin of error for the overall sample; the error rate was higher for subgroups such as “Democrats.” The dataset was weighted by gender and political party to better represent the general population. College students were trained and used as telephone interviewers.

Contact Dan Nataf, Ph.D., center director, for additional comments or questions at 410-777-2733 and ddnataf@acc.edu. Check the CSLI website for results from this and previous surveys: www2.aacc.edu/csl.

⁸ Relationships between party and views of the county, state and nation were statistically significant ($p < .05$). Relationships between party and individual circumstances were not. The previously mentioned Gallup poll also found sharp partisan divides regarding satisfaction with the way things are going in the United States, with 47 percent of Democrats, 24 percent of unaffiliated, and 9 percent of Republicans claiming to be satisfied.

Appendix A: Questionnaire

CSLI Semi-Annual Survey – Spring, 2013

(All numeric values in answer categories are percentages unless otherwise indicated.
Totals may not be 100 percent due to rounding.)

1. What do you think is the most important problem facing the residents of Anne Arundel County at the present time? (DON'T READ THE LIST! Have them *volunteer* an answer)

Problem	Percent
Crime/Drugs	5
Economy – (e.g., no jobs, high cost of living, business closing or losses)	23
Education, problems with schools	8
Environment (e.g., air or water pollution, saving the Bay)	3
Government – corrupt, unethical	6
Government – inefficient, wasteful, spends too much	5
Government – lacks resources for roads, schools, services	2
Growth/overpopulation- too much development	2
Healthcare (cost, access)	1
Taxes – too high	19
Transportation problems/traffic congestion	5
Other answer - write in:	12
Unsure/No Answer	10

2. The next questions ask you to say whether things are going in the right or wrong direction. First, would you say that the county is headed in the right direction or in the wrong direction? How about the state of Maryland? How about the nation as a whole? How about you personally?

	Right	Wrong	Unsure/Don't know
2.1 County	49	33	18
2.2 State	35	55	10
2.3 Nation	24	63	13
2.4 You personally	74	14	12

3. Next I would like to know how you would rate economic conditions in Anne Arundel County, in Maryland, and in the United States generally. First how would you rate economic conditions in Anne Arundel County -- excellent, good, only fair, or poor? How about the state? How about the nation?

	Excellent	Good	Only fair	Poor	Unsure/Don't know
3.1 County	3	46	38	11	3
3.2 State	1	29	41	24	4
3.3 Nation	2	10	38	47	3

4. Thinking now about your personal circumstances, please tell me whether any of these economic conditions apply to you or your household.

	Applies	Doesn't apply	Unsure, no answer
4.1 Wages or salaries are not rising as fast as the cost of living	59	38	3
4.1a Received a salary increase or other increase in income recently	34	64	3
4.2 Facing the possibility of unemployment	19	78	4
4.2a Found a new or better job recently	14	84	2
4.3 Significant losses in your stock or retirement accounts	32	66	3
4.4 Facing the possibility of house foreclosure or loss	7	92	0
4.5 Unable to find affordable housing	12	86	2
4.6 Hard to afford the cost of transportation	27	70	3
4.7 Hard to afford the cost of utilities such as electricity or gas	31	67	1
4.8 Delay in making a major purchase such as a home or car	42	56	2
4.9 Health care insurance is unavailable, too expensive or inadequate	32	65	3
4.10 Taxes are too high in relation to government services provided	62	35	4

4.11 How important is retirement planning to you at this point in your life – very, somewhat or not very important? (1) very 62% (2) somewhat 17% (3) not very 15% (0) No answer, unsure 5%

5. Thinking about the next twelve months and the county's economy, please answer the following questions by saying whether a particular condition will be better, the same or worse:

	Better	Same	Worse	Unsure/NA
5.1 Economic growth	31	39	24	6
5.2 Unemployment	24	32	37	7
5.3 Inflation	9	32	52	8
5.4 Your personal financial situation	23	58	16	4

Changing our focus...

6.0 Has the county ever contacted you by landline about a crime, weather event, or other emergency?

(1) Yes 54% (2) No 42% (0) Unsure, no answer 5%

6.1 Are you aware that such county's emergency communications are handled by the Code Red system?

(1) Yes 35% (2) No 61% (0) Unsure, no answer 4% (IF NO OR UNSURE/NA, GO TO NEXT PAGE)



6.2 Have you signed up to be able to receive emergency notifications by cell phone, text message or email?

(1) Yes 14% (2) No 28% (0) Unsure, no answer 58% (IF NO OR UNSURE/NA, GO TO NEXT PAGE)



6.3 (IF THEY SAY "YES" ASK) Have you ever been contacted on your cell phone or by email using the Code Red system?

(1) Yes 10% (2) No 9% (0) Unsure, no answer 81%

6.4 Some methods the county might use to communicate with you require you to sign up and provide a cell phone number or an email address while others do not. When I read a list of ways in which the county might reach you, indicate whether you favor or oppose each method.

Method	Favor	Oppose	Unsure	No answer
6.41 Landline call	82	15	2	0
6.42 Email	61	36	2	1
6.43 County Web site	52	42	2	3
6.44 Text message	51	46	2	1
6.45 Cell phone call	49	48	2	1
6.46 Facebook	19	74	3	4
6.47 Twitter	14	79	3	5

6.5 Of these methods, which method do you think would work best for you? (one answer only)

(1) Landline call 39% (2) Cell phone call 16% (3) Text message 21% (4) Email 15% (5) Facebook 1% (6) Twitter 1% (7) County Web site 5% (8) none, no preference 1% (0) no answer, unsure 3%

7. The following items are proposals that the county and state are considering or may consider in the future. When I read a proposal to you, indicate whether you support or oppose it.

	Support	Oppose	Unsure	No answer
7.1 Repealing the death penalty and replacing it with life without the possibility of parole	39	52	7	2
7.2 Having those seeking to purchase a handgun pay a \$100 fee at the time of purchase	45	49	4	2
7.3 Having handgun purchasers be fingerprinted at the time of purchase	78	19	3	0
7.4 Having handgun purchasers be required to complete a safety course prior to purchase	82	16	2	0
7.5 Expanding wind energy financed by a monthly \$1.50 fee on residential BGE customers	43	53	4	0
7.6 Paying an annual fee of \$85 to help pay for storm water management and Bay clean-up	36	61	2	1
7.7 Providing curbside composting pickup	66	27	5	2
7.8 Allowing county charter schools to tap into the same construction funding for building facilities currently used by regular public schools	39	51	9	1
7.9 Allowing counties to increase the sales tax on gasoline sales to improve roads.	21	77	3	0

8. What should be the top priority of the newly appointed county executive in terms of improving the county during the period until elections in 2014?

See text for analysis

9. Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as president?

(1) Approve 44% (2) Disapprove 51% (0) No answer 4%

9.1 What should be the top priority of President Obama as he starts his second term of office?

See analysis in text

10. Overall, which party, the (Democrats) or the (Republicans), do you trust to do a better job in coping with the main problems the nation faces over the next few years?

(1) Democrats 37% (2) Republicans 32% (3) Neither (volunteered) 26% (4) Other (volunteered) 2% (0) No answer 2%

11. With which political party, if any, are you registered?

(1) Democratic 42%
 (2) Republican 37%
 (3) Unaffiliated (or “independent”) 16%
 (4) Other (e.g., Green, Libertarian parties) 1%
 (5) None (NOT REGISTERED TO VOTE) 5%
 (0) No Answer 0%

12. Which of the following best describes your political beliefs: Conservative, Moderate or Liberal?

(1) Conservative 31% (2) Moderate 44% (3) Liberal 21% (0) Other, No Answer 5%

13. What is your age? _____ (Write in)

Age group	Percentage
18-30	3
31-40	9
41-50	21
51-60	28
61-65	12
66 or more	26
Total	99

14. I am going to read some categories relating to education. Please stop me when I reach the category in which the highest level of your formal education falls.

(1) less than a high school diploma 2%	(5) Completed a 4 year bachelor’s degree 26%
(2) a high school diploma 12%	(6) post graduate work 29%
(3) some college 20%	(7) Something else? 3%
(4) Completed a 2 year associate college degree 8%	(0) No Answer 0%

15. I am going to read some categories relating to income. Please stop me when I reach the category in which your household income falls.

- (1) Less than \$30,000 7%
- (2) \$30,000 to \$50,000 11%
- (3) \$50,001 to \$75,000 14%
- (4) \$75,001-\$100,000 15%
- (5) \$100,001-\$150,000 16%
- (6) \$150,001-\$250,000 14%
- (7) Over \$250,000 8%
- (0) No Answer 16%

16. Stop me when I reach the employment category that best describes your situation

Answer choice	Choose one
Retired and not working	29%
Retired and working	5%
Self-employed	11%
Employed full time for a company in the private sector	23%
Employed full time for government in a non-defense related activity such as education, public works or public safety	15%
Employed full time in a defense related activity	4%
Employed in a private non-profit organization	3%
Employed part time	3%
Student (and possibly working part-time)	1%
Unemployed and seeking a job	2%
Unemployed and not seeking a job	2%
No answer	1%

**16.1 IF you are not already retired, at what age do you plan to retire? _See analysis in text___ years
(ONLY ASK IF RESPONDENT SAID SOMETHING OTHER THAN “RETIRED” ABOVE)**

17. Regarding race, how would you describe yourself?

- (1) Asian 0%
- (2) Black or African American 12%
- (3) Hispanic or Latino 1%
- (4) White 81%
- (5) Other 1%
- (0) No answer 4%

18. Regarding religion, how would you describe yourself?

- (1) None (e.g., *atheist, agnostic*) 7%
- (2) Non-practicing 8%
- (3) Evangelical or born again Christian (*possibly Baptist, Pentecostal*) 11%
- (4) Catholic 30%
- (5) Jewish 2%
- (6) Protestant (*possibly Lutherans, Methodists, Presbyterian, Anglican, Episcopalian*) 25%
- (7) Some other Christian (*possibly Mormon*) 4%
- (8) A ‘spiritual person’ not associated with an organized religion 4%
- (9) Other (e.g., *Hindu, Muslim*) 4%
- (0) No Answer 6%

19. What is your current marital status?

(1) Single 11% (2) Married 69% (3) Separated/divorced 12% (4) Widowed 7% (5) Other 0% (0) No answer 1%

20. I have one last request: In an attempt to provide students with more opportunities to survey the public, the Center is asking respondents if they would like to be contacted no more than once or twice a semester by email to participate in short surveys. Can we count on your help?

(1) Yes 51% (2) No 49%

**20.1 IF YES: What email address shall we use to contact you?
(CLEAR SPELLING/HANDWRITING PLEASE!)**

SAY: That concludes our survey, thanks for participating.

Once the respondent hangs up, make sure to enter GENDER and ZIP CODE

21. Gender of respondent to whom you were speaking: (1) Male 49% (2) Female 51% (0) Unknown

22. Zipcode (from calling sheet (Note all zip codes below were cited at least once)

20711	1
20714	0
20724	1
20733	0
20751	1
20755	1
20764	1
20765	0
20776	0
20778	1
20779	0
21012	4
21032	3
21035	1
21037	4
21054	2
21056	0
21060	4
21061	9
21076	0
21090	3
21103	0
21108	7
21113	5
21114	6
21122	9
21140	1
21144	5
21146	8
21401	10
21402	1
21403	7
21405	0
21409	4
21504	0
Total	99