

Press Release: March 17, 2009
Center for the Study of Local Issues
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Anne Arundel County Survey Finds that Economy is Main Concern

A survey of 625 Anne Arundel County residents conducted March 9-12 by the students of the Center for the Study of Local Issues (CSLI) at Anne Arundel Community College found that the economy continues to dominate the public’s concerns.

The survey started with an open-ended question asking “What is the most important problem facing the residents of Anne Arundel County at the present time?”

In the past, the economy was a second order concern, only occasionally ascending to double digits. Since March 2008, the percentage citing the economy has shown a steady rise, reaching an all-time high this March – 48 percent. Another marker for economic concerns – taxes – held nearly steady at 10 percent.

Table 1: “Most Important Problem facing Residents” – Spring 2004 to Spring 2009¹

	Spring '04	Fall '04	Spring '05	Fall '05	Spring '06	Fall '06	Spring '07	Fall '07	Spring '08	Fall '08	Spring '09	Mean
Economy	12	8	7	7	15	7	12	8	23	38	48	17
Taxes – too high	13	10	13	10	10	9	15	17	16	12	10	12
Growth/development	8	14	18	22	16	21	16	16	12	9	5	14
Education	22	12	16	12	13	16	12	12	12	10	8	13
Traffic congestion/problems	10	17	9	14	9	12	11	12	7	6	4	10
Crime	4	6	5	6	11	11	9	10	6	4	6	7
Unsure/no answer	10	13	11	11	8	7	9	6	9	7	8	9
Other answer	21	20	21	18	18	17	16	19	15	14	11	17
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	99

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

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

Other Measures Confirm Predominance of a Declining Economy

Since March 2002 the CSLI semi-annual survey has asked a benchmark question about the economy: “Thinking about our county's economy, how would you rate economic conditions in Anne Arundel County today -- excellent, good, only fair, or poor?”

This March, the question was extended and asked also about perceptions of economic conditions in the state of Maryland and the country overall.

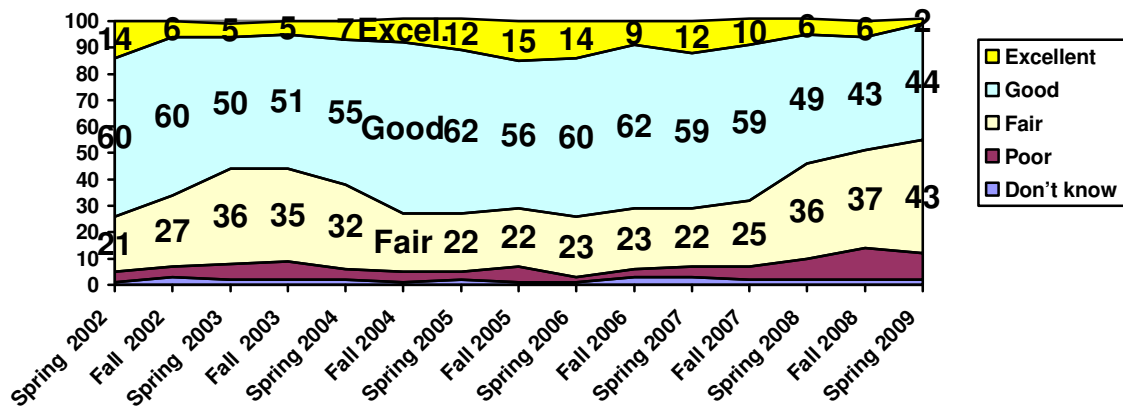
For Anne Arundel County, the historical percentage saying that the economy was a combined “excellent” or “good” has averaged 64 percent. As shown on Table 2 and Graph 1, there was a continuation of a pessimistic trend this spring, as the combined score continued its decline from 55 percent one year ago to 46 percent this spring.

Dan Nataf, PhD, center director, noted that “these results show that the public’s shift to the economy as the main focus of concern had already been achieved by last fall. Results for this spring reinforce the perception of a declining economy in people’s minds.”

Table 2: Perceptions of County Economic Conditions

Condition	Fall 2002	Spring 2003	Fall 2003	Spring 2004	Fall 2004	Spring 2005	Fall 2005	Spring 2006	Fall 2006	Spring 2007	Fall 2007	Spring 2008	Fall 2008	Spring 2009	Mean
Excellent +Good	66	55	56	62	74	74	71	74	71	71	69	55	49	46	64
Excellent	6	5	5	7	9	12	15	14	9	12	10	6	6	2	8
Good	60	50	51	55	65	62	56	60	62	59	59	49	43	44	55
Fair	27	36	35	32	22	22	22	23	23	22	25	36	37	43	29
Poor	4	6	7	4	4	3	6	2	3	4	5	8	12	10	6
Don't know	3	2	2	2	1	2	1	1	3	3	2	2	2	2	2
Total	100	99	100	100	101	101	100	100	100	100	101	101	100	101	100

**Graph 1: Economic Conditions in Anne Arundel County
Spring 2002-Spring 2009**

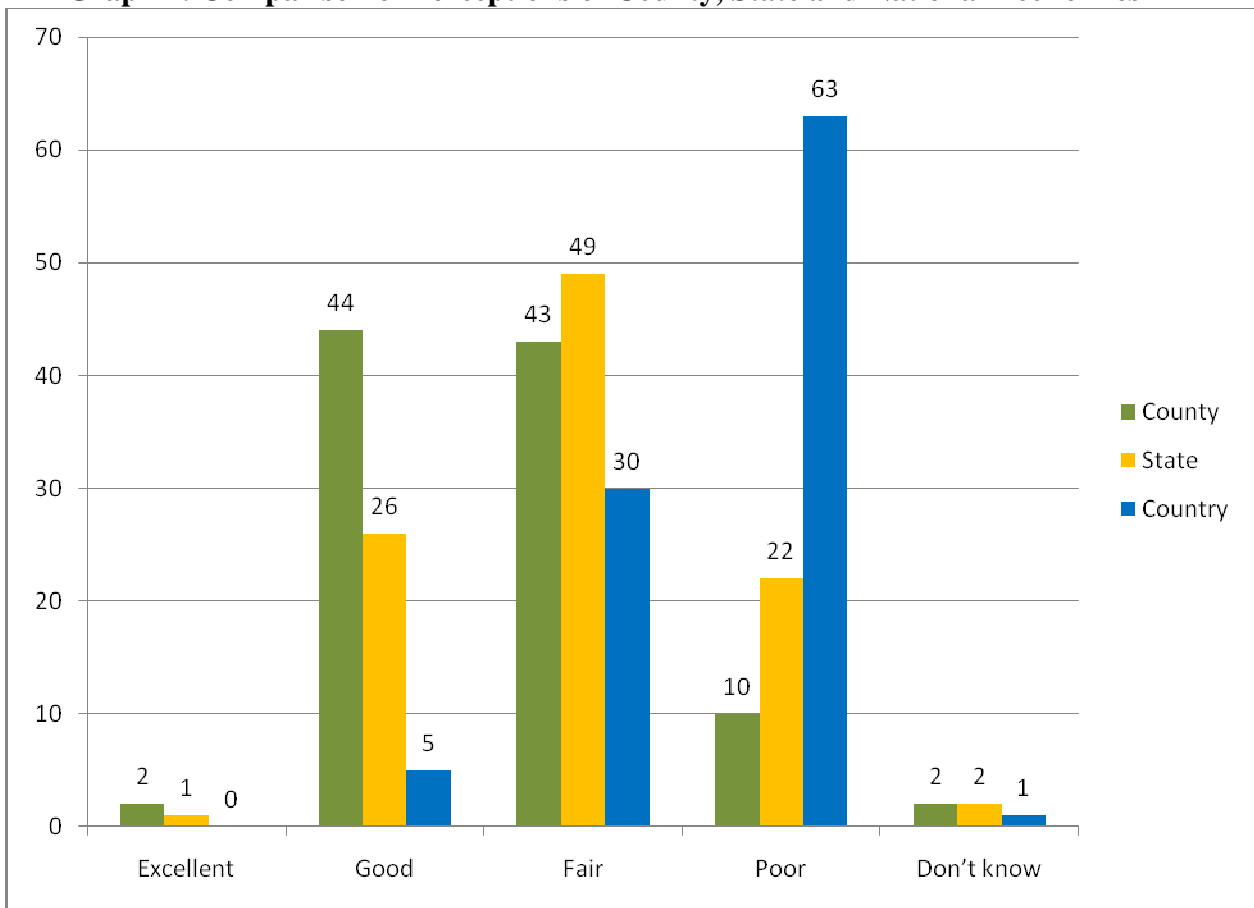


The spring survey also tapped the public’s view of state and national economies. Maryland’s economy fared somewhere in between the county and nation. As shown on Graph 2, the proportion saying “poor” was much larger (63 percent) for the national level compared with the county (10 percent) or state (22 percent). “Clearly, the public perceives the national economy as being in much greater trouble than the state or local levels,” Nataf commented.

Table 3: Perceptions of County, State and National Economies

Condition	County	State	Country
Excellent+Good	46	27	5
Excellent	2	1	0
Good	44	26	5
Fair	43	49	30
Poor	10	22	63
Don’t know	2	2	1
Total	101	100	99

Graph 2: Comparison of Perceptions of County, State and National Economies



Recent Gallup polling of national samples produced a positive (excellent plus good) rating of only 3 percent. The CSLI spring survey came very close to these results: a positive 5 percent. Moreover, a growing percentage viewed economic conditions as getting “poor,” increasing from 59 last fall to 63 percent this spring (see Table 4).

Table 4: Perceptions of National Economic Conditions

Condition	Spring 2009	Fall 2008
Excellent+Good	5	5
Excellent	0	1
Good	5	4
Fair	30	36
Poor	63	59
Don't know	1	1
Total	99	101

Nataf said that these results “apparently show that as the unit of analysis gets larger, people’s opinions grow less favorable, with increasingly pessimistic assessments of the economy. The results may also point to the relatively favorable economic conditions found in Anne Arundel County where unemployment rates are several points lower than the national figures.”

Since spring 2008, CSLI surveys have included a battery of questions focused on specific aspects of economic distress such as inflation, stock/retirement losses, unemployment, house foreclosure, housing affordability, the cost of transportation, and the like.

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 three CSLI surveys.

Table 5: Economic Conditions Applying to Personal Circumstances

Condition	Applies Spring 2009	Applies Fall 2008	Applies Spring 2008	Spring 09-Fall '08
Significant losses in stocks or retirement accounts	75	71	n.a.	+4
Hard to afford cost of taxes*	59	58	47	+1
Wages or salaries are not rising as fast as the cost of living	55	59	56	-4
Hard to afford cost of utilities such as electricity or gas	53	50	61	+3
Delay in making a major purchase such as a home or car	51	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Health care insurance is unavailable, too expensive or inadequate	29	30	35	-1
Facing the possibility of unemployment	24	15	11	+9
Hard to afford cost of transportation	21	32	40	-11
Unable to find affordable housing	12	11	21	+1
Facing the possibility of house foreclosure or loss	6	4	6	+2

* The exact wording of this item changed from spring 2008 to fall 2008, partly accounting for the change in percentages during that time.

Table 5 shows the evolution of the public’s responses to this set of questions. Two results stand out as changes from last fall: a 9 percent increase in the numbers citing “the possibility of unemployment” and an 11 percent drop in the percent saying that it was “hard to afford the cost of transportation.”

“The more alarming of these major changes is the sharp increase in those fearing unemployment, which constitutes more than a doubling of the percentage citing such a fear over the last year,” Nataf said. “These rising fears of unemployment appear to complement a small decrease in concern with inflation, although the cost of utilities continues to stand out as a significant inflationary factor.”

Indicative of the national dimensions of the economic crisis, there was a 4 point rise to 75 percent saying they had experienced “significant losses in stocks or retirement accounts,” which continued from last fall as the single most commonly experienced item. While this factor was broadly experienced, it particularly affected those in higher income groups, with 85 percent of those earning over \$75,000 mentioning it compared to 64 percent of those with household incomes under \$75,000.

“As incomes rise, people are more inclined to save and invest in equities. Given the kind of economic crisis we’ve experienced which has so deeply impacted the value of stocks and other estate investments, sharing in the ownership of the private economy has also meant sharing both the boom and bust parts of the business cycle,” said Nataf.

A new question added this spring asked whether respondents had experienced a “delay in making a major purchase such as a home or car”; a majority (51 percent) had. “This points to the public’s reluctance to spend money given these uncertain economic times,” Nataf said.

Nearly half of all respondents (46 percent) said that they expected the recession to last more than two years. Fifty-three percent of these respondents had experienced a delay in making a major purchase, implying that those with a perception of long-term crisis were most likely to save rather than consume. Only 46 percent of those thinking that the crisis would last no more than a year affirmed a purchase delay.

Last fall the CSLI survey asked about residents’ confidence in “moves taken by the federal government in response to the financial crisis.” As seen in Table 6, a majority were “not very confident” that the various measures undertaken by the federal government would resolve the financial crisis. In spring, there was slightly more optimism, with a 7 percent rise in the percentage saying very or somewhat confident – 52 percent – compared to only 45 percent last fall.

Table 6: Confidence in Moves taken by the Federal Government

Level of Confidence	Spring 2009	Fall 2008
Very confident	12	5
Somewhat confident	40	40
Not very confident	46	53
Unsure	2	3
Don’t know	0	0
Total	100	101

The spring 2009 survey also asked whether respondents were likely to “take advantage of tax incentives to purchase a new car or new home during the coming year.” About three-quarters

(74 percent) were not likely. Of those most confident in the federal government moves, 31 percent were likely to take advantage of the tax incentives, compared to only 16 percent of those who were least confident.

“It seems that those who view the moves as likely to be effective were more likely to take advantage of the various incentives provided by the federal government,” said Nataf.

Summary of Other Findings

The CSLI survey evaluated a range of other issues including issues affecting Anne Arundel County dealing with budget choices, fees and the general development plan. There were also state questions dealing with the death penalty and budget choices. National issues included bipartisanship and President Obama’s job approval.

Right direction/wrong direction: There was a noticeable decline in the percentage saying that the county was moving in the right direction – 47 percent – down from 52 percent last October.

Wind turbines: A majority (65 percent) favored allowing residents to put wind turbines on house roofs to provide electricity.

Residential water sprinklers: About half of the sample (47 percent) favored “requiring the installation of water sprinklers in new residential construction and when residents make large additions.”

Furloughing county employees: About an equal number favored (43 percent) and disfavored (44 percent) this approach to balancing the county’s budget.

Death penalty: Most residents (54 percent) did not favor the elimination of the death penalty.

Waterway restoration fee: A majority (56 percent) did not favor “adding a \$30 fee to property taxes to pay for stream and waterway restoration.”

Alcoholic beverage tax increase: A majority (54 percent) favored “increasing the tax on alcoholic beverages.”

Text messaging while driving: An overwhelming majority (83 percent) favored illegalizing text messaging on a cell phone while driving.

Slots: The public was sharply divided about the future of slots in Anne Arundel County.

Informed that a bid to place slots at Arundel Mills mall rather than Laurel race track had been made, a plurality (44 percent) said that they “wished that such a facility would have been placed at Laurel race track” instead. Only 16 percent agreed with a decision to put slots at the mall.

General development plan: Two thirds (66 percent) agreed that the general development plan should put future growth in “areas that already have infrastructure.” A majority (62 percent) did not favor increasing housing densities as a way of encouraging economic development and creating jobs. Only a minority (30 percent) thought that the current general development plan had done a good job of balancing economic development and growth.

County spending – reduce, keep the same, increase: When asked how the county government might help balance its budget by reducing, increasing, or keeping the same level of spending for various services, the public consistently favored increasing or keeping the same level of funding rather than advocating reductions.

Cut programs, raise taxes: When asked whether cutting programs or raising taxes would best deal with looming budget deficits at the local or state levels, respondents embraced cutting programs (61 percent) rather than raising taxes (17 percent) or some combined approach (14 percent) for the county, with similar percentages for the state.

President Barack Obama's job approval: This was the first time a CSLI poll asked about the new president's job approval – 53 percent approved.

Bipartisanship in Washington: The sample was much more likely to say that President Obama was trying to compromise with Republican leaders in Congress on important issues (57 percent) than were Republican leaders trying to compromise with President Obama (28 percent). Only 20 percent believed that partisan divisions would be soon overcome, while 70 percent believed that the political parties should try to cooperate and find bipartisan agreement.

Political parties: Democrats were somewhat more likely to be trusted (42 percent) “to do a better job in coping with the main problems the nation faces over the next few years” compared to the Republicans (30 percent)

Methodology: The survey polled a random sample of 625 county residents who were at least 18 years old. It was conducted March 9-12, 2009, during evening hours. Phone numbers were derived from a database of listed numbers as well as computer chosen, randomly assigned numbers. There was about a 4 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 to better represent the general population. College students were trained and used as telephone interviewers.

Contact Dan Nataf, PhD, center director, for additional comments or questions at 410-777-2733 and ddnataf@acc.edu. Check the CSLI Web site for results from previous surveys: www.aacc.edu/csli.

Main Findings

County – Right or Wrong Direction?

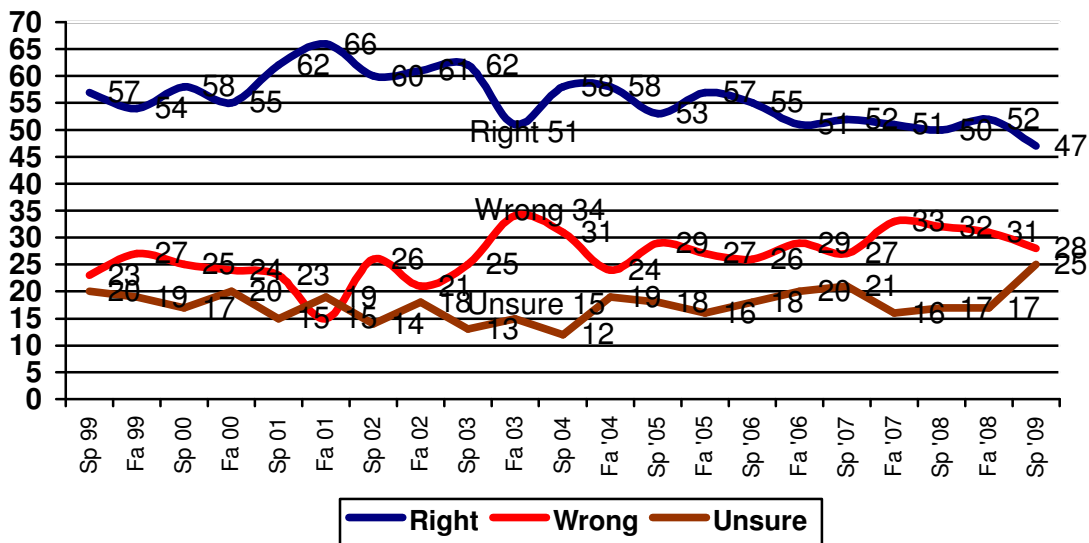
The survey included a CSLI benchmark question whose results are seen on Table 7: “Overall, would you say that the county is headed in the right direction or in the wrong direction?”

Graph 3 shows there was a decrease in the percentage of those saying “right direction” from 52 percent last fall to only 47 percent this spring. “The resiliency of ‘right direction’ answers we saw last fall has finally succumbed to growing economic pessimism. While 58 percent of those rating the county’s economic conditions as excellent or good offered ‘right direction’ answers, only 37 percent of those saying ‘fair’ or ‘poor’ did so. Apparently this signals a declining ability for the public to compartmentalize its overall views of the county from their views of the local economy,” said Nataf.

Table 7: Anne Arundel County - Right vs. Wrong Direction

Response	Percent
Right direction	47
Wrong direction	28
Unsure	25
Total	100

Graph 3: County – Right or Wrong Direction?



Other County Issues (see Table 8 for percentages)

Wind Turbines on Roofs

Residents were strongly favorable to allowing residents to put electricity generating wind turbines on their house roofs (65 percent supporting).

Water Sprinklers

Sentiments were mixed on this issue, with under half (47 percent) favoring a requirement to place water sprinklers in new residential construction and in cases where large additions are made to existing structures; 45 percent opposed such a requirement.

Furloughing County Workers

Sentiments were evenly balanced on this issue, with nearly an equal percentage (43/44 percent) supporting or opposing such a measure as a means of balancing the county's budget. Among employment categories, furloughs were least likely to be supported by those employed for government (other than in a defense capacity) with 36 percent of such respondents supporting and 57 percent opposing. Furloughs were most likely to be favored by those employed in the private sector (50 percent favoring, 40 percent opposing).

Table 8: Various County Issues

	Support	Oppose	Unsure	No answer
Permitting county residents to put wind turbines on house roofs to provide electricity?	65	22	12	1
Requiring the installation of water sprinklers in new residential construction and when residents make large additions?	47	45	7	1
Furloughing county employees to help balance the county's budget	43	44	10	2
Adding a \$30 fee to property taxes to pay for stream and waterway restoration	39	56	4	1

Waterway Restoration Fee

A proposal to add a \$30 waterway restoration fee to property taxes was not well supported, with a majority (56 percent) against. "Opposition to this proposed fee was accentuated among lower income respondents, 59 percent of which disfavored the fee; only 50 percent of those with higher incomes (over \$75,000) were against it," Nataf remarked.

Slots at Arundel Mills

A question was included which asked whether respondents agreed with "a decision to place slots at Arundel Mills" or whether they would have preferred that such a facility had been placed at Laurel race track. Table 9 shows the results. By nearly a 3 to 1 margin, a plurality (44 percent) preferred to see slots placed at Laurel rather than at the mall in Arundel Mills. "The prospect of having slots placed near a commercial mall was probably not part of the way the

general public conceptualized its support for adding slots facilities in Maryland,” Nataf suggested.

Table 9: Slots at Arundel Mills vs. Laurel Race Track

Proposal	Percent
I agree with a decision to place slots at Arundel Mills	16
I wish that such a facility would have been placed at Laurel Race Track	44
I am against slots at either facility	30
Something else (typically place slots at both or either facility)	7
No answer	4
Total	101

County Budget Issues

The survey attempted to capture the public’s sentiments about looming budget deficits and approaches which the county might take to deal with these fiscal constraints. Respondents were first presented with a variety of spending categories and asked “whether spending should be reduced, kept the same or increased as government seeks to balance its budget.”

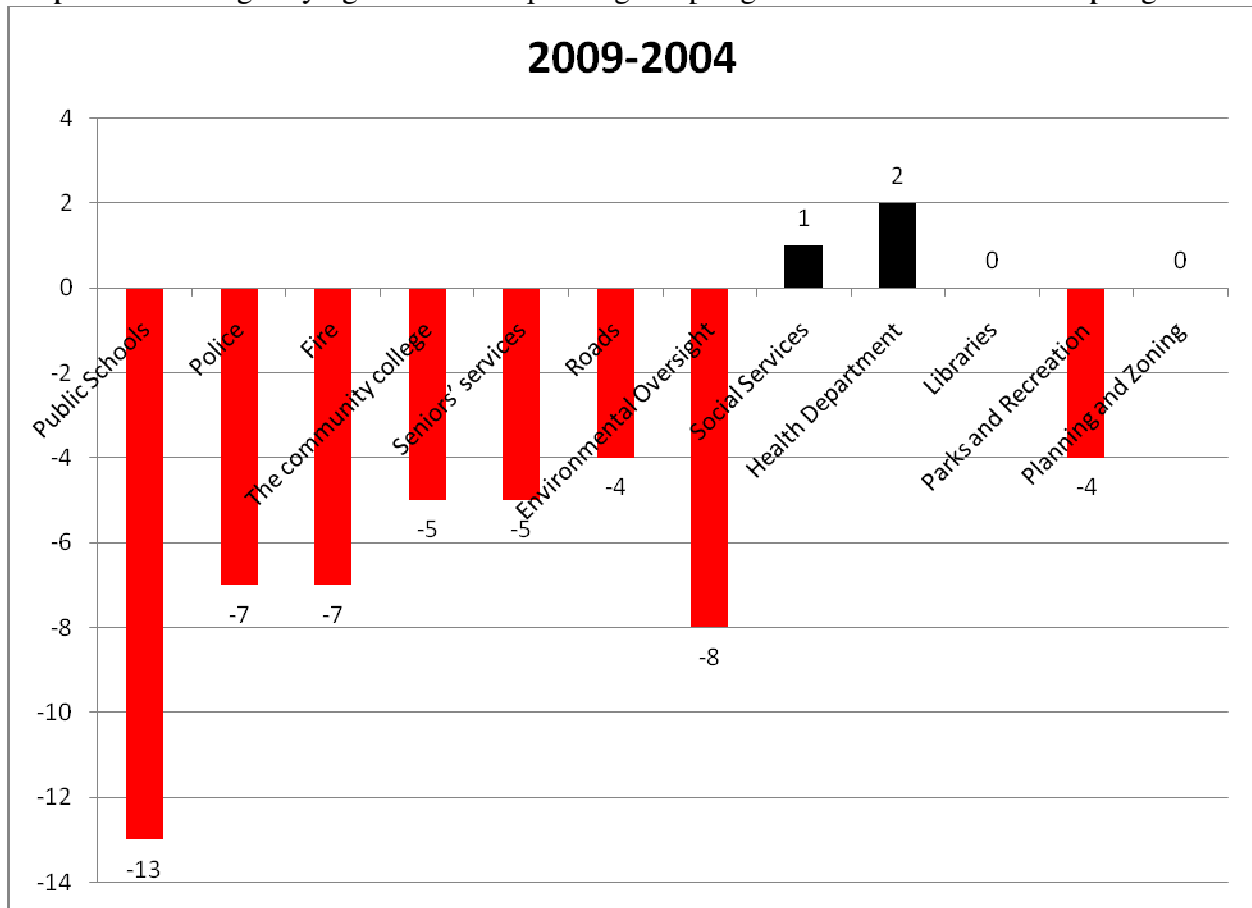
As shown on Table 10, a majority favored increasing spending for public schools and police, with large percentages also favoring increases for fire and Anne Arundel Community College. Only planning and zoning had a larger percentage favoring a *decrease* rather than an increase in spending. “These results show that when the public is presented a set of discrete spending categories, it is unable to provide useful guidance as to where to cut spending, even when the question specifically requests such assistance,” Nataf said.

There was a difference between the percentage saying “increase” in 2009 compared to spring 2004, the last time this question was asked. As shown on Graph 4, the percentage saying increase in 2009 was lower than was the case in 2004 for all cases except health and social services.

Table 10: Increase, Reduce or Keep County Spending Unchanged

Service	Increase	Reduce	Keep the same	Don’t know
Public Schools	58	6	35	2
Police	53	5	41	1
Fire	46	2	50	2
The community college	41	6	49	4
Seniors’ services	39	7	52	3
Roads	39	10	51	1
Social Services	35	16	45	4
Health Department	34	13	46	6
Environmental Oversight	31	18	47	4
Libraries	26	8	64	2
Parks and Recreation	22	17	59	3
Planning and Zoning	13	29	49	9

Graph 4: Percentage saying “Increase” Spending in Spring 2009 Minus those from Spring 2004



“Apparently the public was somewhat less generous to most spending categories this spring, perhaps reflecting the greater severity of the economic circumstances in 2009 than was the case in 2004,” said Nataf.

A second question asked respondents whether budget deficits should be primarily handled by cutting programs or increasing taxes. Given the priority to raising or maintaining spending in the previous question, attitudinal consistency would imply a resistance to programmatic cuts. However, as shown on Table 11, this was not the case (this question was asked both for the county and the state, with virtually identical results).

Table 11: Cut Programs or Raise Taxes

Approach	County	State
Cut Programs	61	60
Raise taxes	17	18
Some other approach or “both” (volunteered)	14	14
Don't know	8	8

“The public faces competing dilemmas: cuts in spending are undesirable, especially when itemized; increases in taxes are undesirable, especially when unspecified. When unspecified cuts in programs are counterpoised to unspecified increases in taxes, the anti-tax impulse clearly prevails,” Nataf said.

State Issues (see Table 12)

Increasing Taxes on Alcohol

A majority (54 percent) agreed that taxes on alcohol should be increased. Women (66 percent) were especially supportive of this idea compared to men (43 percent).

Table 12: State Issues

Proposal	Support	Oppose	Unsure	No answer
Increasing the tax on alcoholic products	54	39	6	2
Making it illegal to text message on a cell phone while driving.	83	15	2	0
Eliminating the death penalty	36	54	9	1

Text Messaging while Driving

There was near unanimity on the proposal to make “it illegal to text message on a cell phone while driving” as 83 percent agreed. “There was a generational aspect shaping views on this issue, as single people under 30 were much less likely to favor this measure (57 percent favoring),” Nataf said.

Death Penalty

The last time a CSLI survey asked about the repeal of the death penalty was in spring 2007; at that time, 33 percent favored such a repeal, while 58 percent opposed it. As Governor O’Malley made the repeal of the death penalty a top legislative priority for the 2009 session, the question was repeated in the spring 2009 poll. The results were very similar: 36 percent favored the repeal, 54 percent opposed.

“The one group favoring the repeal of the death penalty were African Americans, 57 percent of whom opposed the death penalty, compared to only 33 percent among Caucasians,” Nataf noted. Seculars were somewhat more inclined to repeal the death penalty (45 percent) compared with those with established religions such as Catholics (29 percent), Evangelicals (30 percent), and Protestants (40 percent).

National Issues

President Obama – Job Approval

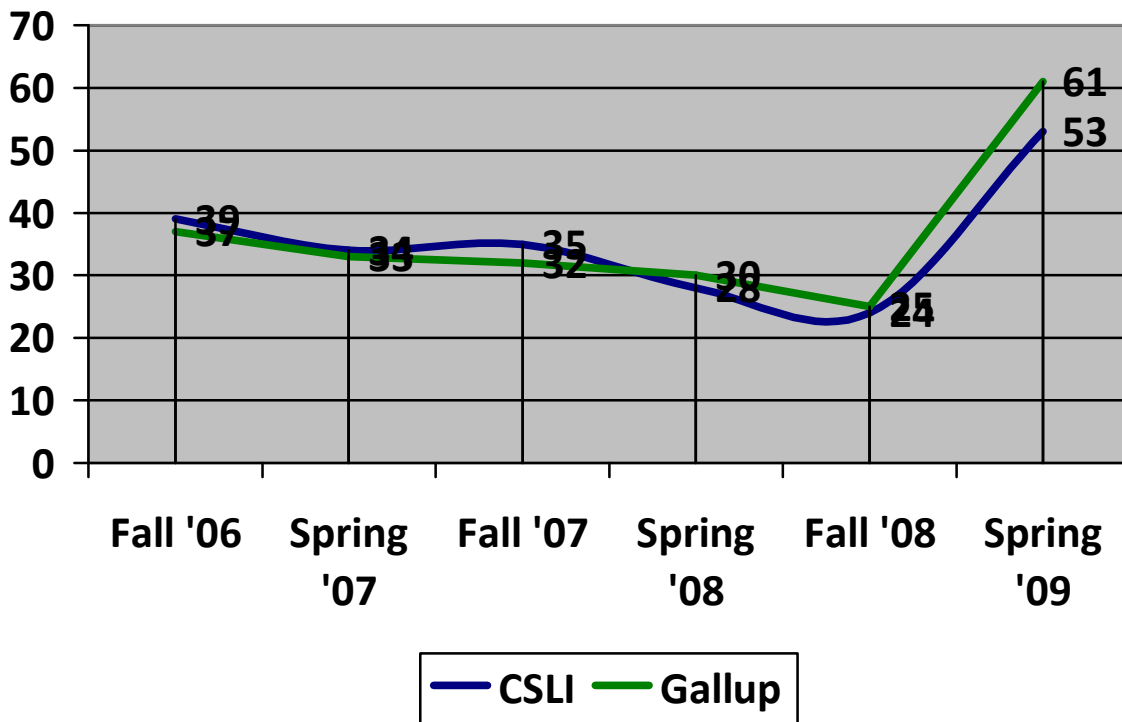
Since fall 2006, CSLI polls have closely tracked national trends as indicated by the Gallup poll. Last fall, the CSLI survey showed that only 24 percent had a favorable view of President Bush’s performance; Gallup polls in October registered a 25 percent favorable figure. (See Table 13 and Graph 5 for details).

With the change to the Obama administration, the job approval question now turned on the public approval of the job done by Barack Obama. As seen on Table 13 and Graph 5, Obama 'honeymoon' period showed a job approval score twice that received by his predecessor last October. The Anne Arundel public was somewhat less supportive than the American public overall, with the local job approval score at 53 percent compared to 61 percent according to the Gallup daily poll taken at the same time.

Table 13: Job Approval for Presidents Bush and Obama

Issue	Fall 2005	Spring 2006	Fall 2006	Spring 2007	Fall 2007	Spring 2008	Fall 2008	Spring 2009
Approve	45	37	39	34	35	28	24	53
Disapprove	48	54	55	58	57	62	69	31
No answer	7	8	7	7	9	10	8	16
Total	100	99	101	99	101	100	101	100

Graph 5: Presidential Job Approval – CSLI and Selected Gallup 2006-2009



As seen on Table 14, Obama’s popularity among Democrats was quite strong (79 percent approving), in sharp contrast to Bush’s relatively limited popularity among Republicans last fall, when only 43 percent approved of the job he was then doing. Obama seemed a mixed case to Republicans, with 25 percent approving and one-fifth not yet having an opinion. The overall job approval values were identical to those expressed by unaffiliated voters.

Table 14: Presidential Job Approval by Partisan Affiliation

	Overall		Democrats		Republicans		Unaffiliated	
	Obama	Bush	Obama	Bush	Obama	Bush	Obama	Bush
Approve	53	24	79	6	25	43	53	24
Disapprove	31	69	11	88	55	48	30	73
No opinion	16	8	11	6	20	9	16	3
Total	100	101	101	100	100	100	99	100

As indicated on Table 15, President Obama’s job approval was very strongly related to the level of confidence expressed by residents regarding the likely effectiveness of moves taken by the federal government in response to the economic crisis. “There is no doubt that having at least ‘some’ confidence in the moves taken by the federal government was a major aspect explaining Obama’s popularity. To the extent that is true, as confidence either lags or rises, his popularity will similarly fall or rise,” Nataf said.

Table 15 President Obama’s Job Approval and Confidence in Moves taken by Federal Govt.

Job evaluation/Confidence	Very confident	Somewhat confident	Not very confident	N.A.
Approve	93	82	21	8
Disapprove	2	6	63	8
No answer	6	13	17	85
Total	101	101	101	101

There was a partisan element to confidence as well, since 75 percent of Democrats expressed at least ‘some’ confidence in the government’s moves, compared to 30 percent of Republicans and 46 percent of unaffiliated. “Whether confidence is based on an assessment of the actual policies proposed by the Obama administration, experienced improvements in economic conditions, or just partisan affiliation remains to be seen,” Nataf said.

Partisanship

The final aspect of the spring survey focused on the political process in Washington. Specifically, the issue of whether President Obama was reaching out to Republican leaders in Congress (and vice versa) was queried.

Table 16: Partisanship in Washington

	Yes	No	Unsure	No answer
Do you think Obama is or is not trying to compromise with the Republican leaders in Congress on important issues?	57	35	7	1
Do you think the Republican leaders in Congress are or are not trying to compromise with Obama on important issues?	28	63	8	1
Do you think that recent events showed that partisan divisions will be overcome soon?	20	69	10	1
Do you think the parties should offer clear and opposing points of view or try to cooperate and find bipartisan agreement?	21	70	8	1

Most respondents (57 percent) thought that President Obama was in fact trying to reach out to Republican leaders in Congress; only 28 percent felt that Republicans were trying to compromise with President Obama.

“Since 70 percent felt that cooperation and bipartisan agreement was desirable, the perception that Republican leaders were not actively trying to compromise with the president may make it hard for the public to trust the Republican party to solve the nation’s problems,” Nataf offered. Indeed, when 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,” respondents gave a 12 point lead to Democrats over Republicans (42/30 percent, with 20 percent saying “neither”).

Methodology

The survey polled a random sample of 625 county residents who were at least 18 years old. It was conducted March 9-12, 2009, during evening hours. Phone numbers were derived from a database of listed numbers as well as computer chosen, randomly assigned numbers. There was about a 4 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 to better represent the general population. College students were trained and used as telephone interviewers.

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CSLI Semiannual Survey – Spring 2009

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	Percentage
Crime	4
Terrorism	0
Drugs (illegal drugs, use or sale)	2
Growth/overpopulation- too much development	5
Traffic congestion/transportation problems	4
Education, problems with schools	8
Taxes – too high	10
Inefficient government, wasteful spending	1
Corruption in government/politicians are bad	0
Environment (e.g., air or water pollution, saving the Bay)	3
Economy – (e.g., no jobs, high cost of living, business closing or losses)	45
Lack of affordable housing	3
Other answer (write in:	6
Unsure/No Answer	8

2. Overall, would you say that the County is headed in the right direction or in the wrong direction?

- (1) **Right** direction 47%
- (2) **Wrong** direction 28%
- (0) **Unsure** or don't know 25%

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?

- (1) Excellent 2% (2) Good 44% (3) Fair 43% (4) Poor 10% (0) Don't Know/N.A. 2%

3.1 How about economic conditions in Maryland overall?

- (1) Excellent 1% (2) Good 26% (3) Fair 49% (4) Poor 22% (0) Don't Know/N.A. 2%

3.2 How about economic conditions in the United States generally?

- (1) Excellent 0% (2) Good 5% (3) Fair 30% (4) Poor 63% (0) Don't Know/N.A. 1%

4. Thinking 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	55	43	2
4.2 Facing the possibility of unemployment	24	73	4
4.3 Significant losses in your stock or retirement accounts	75	22	3
4.4 Facing the possibility of house foreclosure or loss	6	93	1
4.5 Unable to find affordable housing	12	86	2
4.6 Hard to afford cost of transportation	21	78	1
4.7 Hard to afford cost of utilities such as electricity or gas	53	45	1
4.8 Delay in making a major purchase such as a home or car	51	47	2
4.9 Health care insurance is unavailable, too expensive or inadequate	29	69	2
4.10 Taxes are too high for what is received from government services such as education, roads and safety.	59	36	5

5. The following questions ask whether you support or oppose various ideas. Do you support or oppose...

	Support	Oppose	Unsure	No answer
5.1 Permitting county residents to put wind turbines on house roofs to provide electricity?	65	22	12	1
5.2 Requiring the installation of water sprinklers in new residential construction and when residents make large additions?	47	45	7	1
5.3 Furloughing county employees to help balance the county's budget	43	44	10	2
5.4 Eliminating the death penalty	36	54	9	1
5.5 Adding a \$30 fee to property taxes to pay for stream and waterway restoration	39	56	4	1
5.6 Increasing the tax on alcoholic products	54	39	6	2
5.7 Making it illegal to text message on a cell phone while driving.	83	15	2	0

6. As you may know, a recent attempt to find operators for slots facilities in Anne Arundel County resulted in a bid to place such a facility at Arundel Mills mall rather than Laurel Race Track. Which of the following best captures your feelings about this?

- (1) I agree with a decision to place slots at Arundel Mills 16%
- (2) I wish that such a facility would have been placed at Laurel Race Track 44%
- (3) I am against slots at either facility 30%
- (4) Something else (**volunteered**, summarize: _____) 7%
- (0) No answer 4%

7. The county is currently revising its General Development Plan, which provides guidance for future growth in the county. Do you agree or disagree with the following?

	Agree	Disagree	Unsure	No answer
7.1 Growth should be mostly in areas that already have infrastructure, rather than in areas where infrastructure would have to be newly built	66	24	9	2
7.2 The county should make it easier to put more units than is permitted with current zoning as a way of encouraging economic development and creating jobs?	30	62	7	2
7.3 The current general development plan has done a good job of balancing economic development and growth.	30	47	20	3

8. As county government prepares for the upcoming 2010 fiscal budget, it will consider how to cut spending. As I mention an area of spending, tell me whether spending should be reduced, kept the same or increased as government seeks to balance its budget.

Service	Reduced	Kept the same	Increased	Don't know
8.1 Libraries	8	64	26	2
8.2 Fire department	2	50	46	2
8.3 Police department	5	41	53	1
8.4 The community college	6	49	41	4
8.5 Roads	10	51	39	1
8.6 Planning and Zoning	29	49	13	9
8.7 Social Services	16	45	35	4
8.8 Health Department	13	46	34	6
8.9 Public Schools	6	35	58	2
8.10 Parks and Recreation	17	59	22	3
8.11 Seniors' services	7	52	39	3
8.12 Environmental Oversight	18	47	31	4

9. Both the county and the state face looming deficits in their upcoming budgets. Thinking first about the county and then about the state, do you think that a greater emphasis should be placed on cutting programs or raising taxes to deal with budget deficits?

(Say: "How about for the county, do you favor cutting programs or raising taxes?" "Now how about for the state, which do you favor?")

Approach	County	State
Cut Programs	61	60
Raise taxes	17	18
Some other approach or "both" (volunteered)	14	14
Don't know	08	08

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

(1) Approve 53% (2) Disapprove 31% (0) Don't know, unsure 16%

11. Thinking about the moves taken by the federal government in response to the economic crisis, do you feel very confident, somewhat confident, or not very confident that these measures will be effective?

(1) Very confident 12%
 (2) Somewhat confident 40%
 (3) Not very confident 46%
 (4) Unsure 2%
 (0) No answer 0%

12. How likely are you to take advantage of tax incentives to purchase a new car or new home during the coming year – very likely, somewhat likely, or not likely?

(1) Very likely 9% (2) Somewhat likely 15% (3) Not likely 74% (0) Don't know 2%

13. How long do you think it will take for the American economy to head out of recession – less than six months, six months to a year, one to two years, or more than two years?

(1) Less than six months 1%
 (2) Six months to a year 12%
 (3) One to two years 38%
 (4) More than two years 46%
 (0) Don't know, no answer 4%

14. Thinking about the political situation in Washington...

			Unsure	No answer
14.1 Do you think President Obama is or is not trying to compromise with the Republican leaders in Congress on important issues?	57% (is trying)	35% (not trying)	7%	1%
14.2 Do you think the Republican leaders in Congress are or are not trying to compromise with President Obama on important issues?	28% (is trying)	63% (not trying)	8%	1%
14.3 Do you think that recent events showed that partisan divisions will or will not be overcome soon?	20% (will overcome)	69% (won't overcome)	10%	1%
14.4 Do you think the parties should offer clear and opposing points of view or try to cooperate and find bipartisan agreement?	21% (opposing view)	70% (bipartisan agreement)	8%	1%

15. 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 42% (2) Republicans 30% (3) Neither (volunteered) 20%
 (4) Other 3% (0) No answer 5%

We are almost done. The last few questions will help us to better understand your responses.

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

(1) Democratic 41%	4) None (NOT REGISTERED TO VOTE) 5%
(2) Republican 37%	(5) Other (e.g., Green Party) 1%
(3) Unaffiliated 14%	(0) No Answer 3%

17. Thinking about your political beliefs, would you say that on matters dealing with social issues like abortion or gay marriage, are you conservative, moderate or liberal?

- (1) Conservative 35% (2) Moderate 31% (3) Liberal 30% (0) Other, No Answer 4%

17.1 How about on economic issues like taxes and government spending? Are you conservative, moderate or liberal?

- (1) Conservative 45% (2) Moderate 41% (3) Liberal 12% (0) Other, No Answer 2%

18. How about on foreign policy? Do you favor an approach that emphasizes the use of America’s military strength or more diplomatic approaches?

- (1) Favors military strength 21%
 (2) Favors diplomatic approach 58%
 (3) Both equally (volunteered only) 15%
 (0) Unsure, no answer 6%

19. Overall, which of the following best describes your political beliefs: Liberal, Moderate or Conservative?

- (1) Liberal 17% (2) Moderate 48% (3) Conservative 32% (0) Other, No Answer 3%

20. What is your age? _____

Age Grouping	Percent
18-30	8
31-40	12
41-50	24
51-60	23
61-65	9
65 or more	24
Total	101

21. 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	3%	(5) Completed college with a bachelor's degree	26%
(2) a high school diploma	11%	(6) post graduate work	26%
(3) some college but less than a 2 year degree	16 %	(7) Other vocational or technical training	4 %
(4) Completed at least a 2 year associate college degree but without a bachelor's degree	13%	(0) No Answer	0%

22. 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	6%
(2) \$30,000 to \$50,000	12%
(3) \$50,001 to \$75,000	15%
(4) \$75,001-\$100,000	15%
(5) \$100,001-\$150,000	19%
(6) Over \$150,000	12%
(0) No Answer	17%

23. Stop me when I reach the employment categories best describes your situation?

Employed full time for a company in the private sector or self employed	36
Employed full or part time in a private non-profit organization	4
Employed full time for government in a non-defense related activity such as education, public works or public safety	13
Employed full time for government in a defense related activity	6
Employed part time	4
Retired	27
Student	3
Unemployed and seeking a job	3
Unemployed and not seeking a job	3
No answer	1

24. Regarding race, how would you describe yourself?

- (1) African American 9%
- (2) Asian 1%
- (3) Caucasian 81%
- (4) Latino 1%
- (5) Other or mixed racial background 4%
- (0) No Answer 3%

25. Regarding Religion, how would you describe yourself?

- (1) None 8%
- (2) Non-practicing 8%
- (3) Evangelical or born again Christian (possibly Baptist, Pentecostal) 11%
- (4) Catholic 29%
- (5) Jewish 1%
- (6) Protestant (possibly Lutherans, Methodists, Presbyterian, Anglican, Episcopalian) 22%
- (7) Some other Christian 6%
- (8) A 'spiritual person' not associated with an organized religion 5%
- (9) Other 8%
- (0) No Answer 4%

26. What is your current marital status?

- (1) Single 12%
- (2) Married 70%
- (3) Separated/divorced 8%
- (4) Widowed 8%
- (5) Other 1%
- (0) No answer 1%

27. 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 a month by email to participate in short surveys taking no more than a couple of minutes to complete. Can we count on your help? (1) Yes 35% (2) No 65%

27.1 IF YES: What email address shall we use to contact you?

28. Gender of respondent to whom you were speaking:

(1) Male 50% (2) Female 50% (weighted)

29. Zip code _____

Zip	Percent
2140.00	.1
20711.00	.9
20724.00	1.3
20733.00	.3
20755.00	.2
20764.00	1.1
20765.00	.1
20776.00	1.0
20778.00	.8
20779.00	.3
21012.00	6.9
21032.00	2.0
21035.00	.9
21037.00	3.3
21040.00	.2
21054.00	2.0
21060.00	4.0
21061.00	8.0
21076.00	1.5
21090.00	2.0
21105.00	.2
21108.00	4.7
21113.00	5.1
21114.00	4.0
21122.00	13.4
21140.00	.9
21144.00	4.2

21146.00	8.0
21226.00	.5
21401.00	11.6
21402.00	.5
21403.00	5.0
21405.00	.8
21407.00	.1
21409.00	4.2
Total	100.0