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Local Economy, Reactions to Emergencies, and BGE Focus of Anne Arundel County Survey

A survey of 487 Anne Arundel County residents conducted Oct.10-13 by students assisting the Center for the Study of Local Issues (CSLI) at Anne Arundel Community College focused primarily on the economy, various aspects of public's preparations for and reactions to hurricanes and earthquakes, and appraisal of Baltimore Gas and Electric Company's (BGE) ability to deal with power outages. A detailed review of these main themes 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.

Most important problem facing county residents: 48 percent cited the economy.

Perceptions of the economy: 48 percent viewed the county's economy as excellent or good; 33 percent said the same for Maryland's economy compared to only 9 percent for the country as a whole.

Right direction/wrong direction: There was a small drop in the percentage of those saying that the county was moving in the right direction (from 50 to 47 percent).

Economic conditions experienced by individuals: Various measures have been tracked since spring 2008 – the major changes for fall 2011 were an increase among those saying that they had “significant losses in your stock or retirement accounts” (+8 percent points) and a decrease in those saying “hard to afford the cost of transportation” (-11 percent points).

Consumer confidence: Slightly more respondents thought economic growth, unemployment and personal financial situation would worsen rather than improve over the next 12 months, but a majority (54 percent) thought that inflation would get worse over that time.

Anne Arundel County and Maryland – how do these compare to neighboring counties and states?

About a third felt that each of these units fared better, while only 10-14 percent said ‘worse.’

Replenishing Maryland's Transportation Trust Fund: Large majorities opposed increasing the toll on the Bay Bridge (64 percent); creating a new tax on vehicle ownership (86 percent); and increasing the state's property tax (86 percent). Only a suggestion to increase the corporate income tax was favorably greeted by 57 percent.

Emergency preparedness: About half of those asked had developed a family plan of action, obtained a guide to emergency preparedness or put together an emergency preparedness kit. Only 13 percent had signed up for the county's emergency notification system (CodeRed).

Earthquake – respondent's location: Most people were at home or at work during the earthquake on Aug. 23. Large majorities in both cases said that there was no plan providing guidance about what to do in the event of an earthquake.

Earthquake - communication: Most people used the television to find out about the earthquake, particularly those at home. Those at work were more likely to use the Internet. When trying to call friends or family in the immediate aftermath of the earthquake, the most used method was the cell phone, but the most successful technique was text messaging.

Hurricane damage: About one-quarter said that their residence had sustained some damage from the hurricanes; of those, only 33 percent were satisfied with their insurers.

BGE – outages: Two-thirds reported power outages; one-quarter said their outage lasted at least five days.

BGE – response: Over two-thirds (67 percent) said that BGE was effective after the hurricanes hit the area, but only 52 percent agreed that the company had done all it could do to lower the impact before the hurricanes came to the area.

Obama’s job approval: Only 37 percent approved, down ten points from last spring.

Which party do you trust? The percentage favoring Democrats was down three points from last spring (from 34 to 31 percent). The Republicans had peaked a year ago at 37 points, but this fall had dropped to 30 points. The percentage saying ‘neither’ increased from 21 percent one year ago to 32 percent this October.

Methodology: The survey polled a random sample of 487 county residents who were at least 18 years old. It was conducted October 10-13, 2011 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 4.44 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, 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/csli.

The Economy

The Most Important Problem facing Residents

Concern over the state of the economy was first communicated by respondents in answer to the question, “What is the most important problem facing the residents of Anne Arundel County at the present time?” The percentage mentioning the economy matched the high (48 percent) previously reached in March 2009 when the national economy was just starting to recover from the economic crisis. All other items typically mentioned as important problems – taxes, education, transportation, crime – registered values under 10 percent.

Table 1: “Most Important Problem facing Residents” – Fall 2006 to Fall 2011¹

	Fall '06	Spring '07	Fall '07	Spring '08	Fall '08	Spring '09	Fall '09	Spring '10	Fall '10	Spring '11	Fall '11	Mean
Economy	7	12	8	23	38	48	33	36	36	35	48	29
Taxes – too high	9	15	17	16	12	10	12	11	13	11	9	12
Growth / development	21	16	16	12	9	5	5	5	2	4	4	9
Education / school problems	16	12	12	12	10	8	7	8	9	10	5	10
Traffic congestion/ problems	12	11	12	7	6	4	5	6	6	3	5	7
Crime / drugs	11	9	10	6	4	6	8	6	6	6	8	7
Unsure/no answer	7	9	6	9	7	8	10	10	8	12	8	9
Other answer	17	16	19	15	14	11	21	17	21	19	13	17
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	101	99	101	100	100	100

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?’ ”

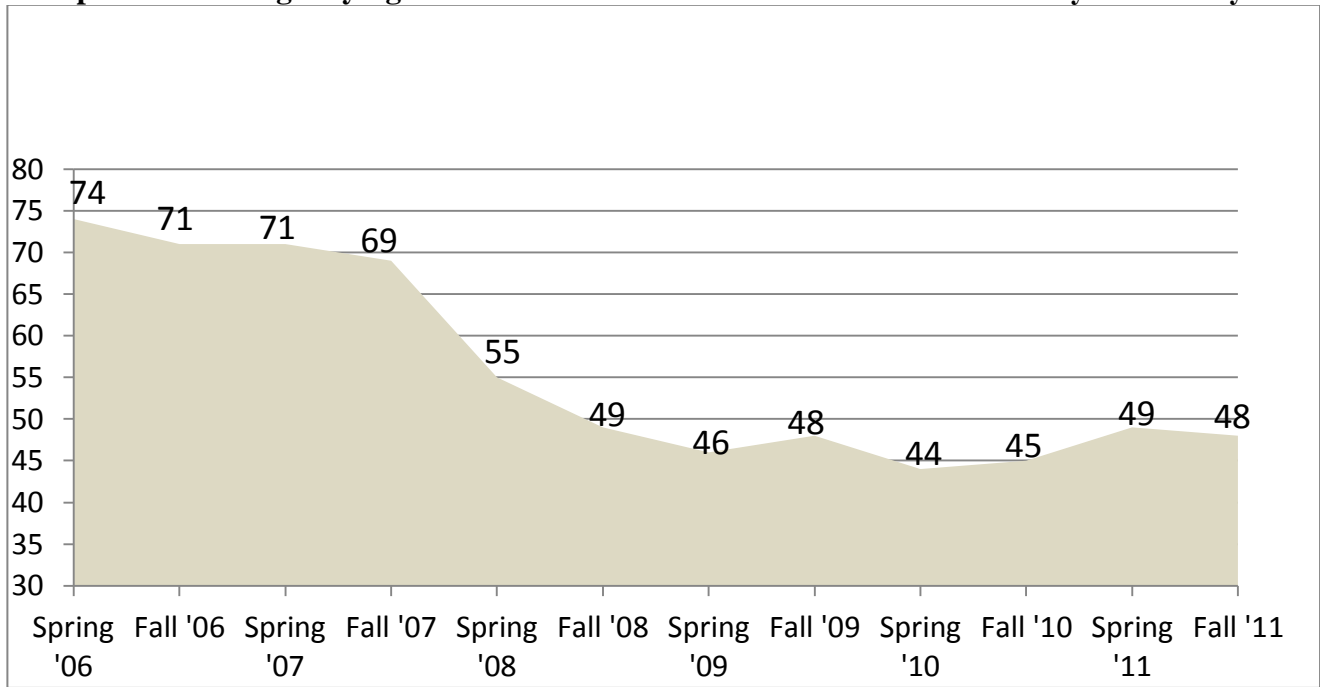
As shown on Table 2, since spring 2006 the county’s historical average saying that the economy was a combined “excellent” or “good” was 56 percent. The fall 2011 value was only 48 percent, and essentially unchanged from last spring. Graph 1 also displays the overall trend over this period of time.

¹ 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: Perceptions of County Economic Conditions

Condition	Spring '06	Fall '06	Spring '07	Fall '07	Spring '08	Fall '08	Spring '09	Fall '09	Spring '10	Fall '10	Spring '11	Fall '11	Mean
Excellent +good	74	71	71	69	55	49	46	48	44	45	49	48	56
Excellent	14	9	12	10	6	6	2	4	3	3	3	4	6
Good	60	62	59	59	49	43	44	44	41	42	46	44	49
Fair	23	23	22	25	36	37	43	38	41	45	38	40	34
Poor	2	3	4	5	8	12	10	11	13	8	12	11	8
Don't know	1	3	3	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2
Total	100	100	100	101	101	100	101	100	100	100	101	101	100

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 economic conditions was extended to asking about the state of Maryland and the country overall.

Regarding the state of Maryland, Table 2.1 shows a small reversal of the trend towards higher ‘excellent/good’ scores. Rather than continuing the gradual rise seen since 2009, the fall survey found the first dip – a two-point drop from 35 to 33 percent.

Table 2.1: Perceptions of State Economy

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

The national economy had been holding steady since fall 2009 at 11 percent – but dropped to 9 percent in this October survey. A national Gallup poll taken Oct. 11-13 also produced a value of 9 percent; the value of the Gallup tracking poll has stayed at or below 10 percent since July 19-21.²

Table 2.2: Perceptions of National Economy

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

According to CSLI director Dan Nataf, “In all three cases, Anne Arundel residents perceived a small drop in the performance of the economy that, combined with the rise in the percentage citing the economy as the most important problem, indicates continued concern that the economic situation is not improving over time.”

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 3 shows the results for the last eight 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.”

² See <http://www.gallup.com/poll/110821/gallup-daily-us-economic-conditions.aspx>

Table 3: Economic Conditions Applying to Personal Circumstances

Condition	Spring '08	Fall '08	Spring '09	Fall '09	Spring '10	Fall '10	Spring '11	Fall '11	Spring '11-Fall '10
Significant losses in your stock or retirement accounts	n.a.	71	75	70	56	60	52	60	+8
Hard to afford cost of taxes*	47	58	59	59	63	60	63	58	-5
Wages or salaries are not rising as fast as the cost of living	56	59	55	55	56	56	63	59	-4
Hard to afford cost of utilities such as electricity or gas	61	50	53	42	44	43	46	39	-7
Delay in making a major purchase such as a home or car	n.a.	n.a.	51	46	47	44	47	51	+4
Health care insurance is unavailable, too expensive or inadequate	35	30	29	33	32	34	35	32	-3
Facing the possibility of unemployment	11	15	24	24	19	21	20	21	+1
Hard to afford cost of transportation	40	32	21	17	21	24	41	30	-11
Unable to find affordable housing	21	11	12	13	15	10	14	11	-3
Facing the possibility of house foreclosure or loss	6	4	6	8	7	7	9	8	-1
Found a new or better job recently	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	14	n.a.
Received a salary increase or other increase in income recently	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	26	n.a.

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

The most volatile of these measures of an individual's economic situation has been the cost of transportation, whose citation percentage has varied from a low of 17 to a high of 41 percent, probably swinging with the price of gasoline. Another item, the 'cost of utilities,' started high with 61 percent citing it in spring 2008, but since fall 2009 has been hovering steadily around 40-45 percent. Also subject to relatively large swings has been the item "significant losses in your stock or retirement accounts" which may reflect oscillations in the stock market. Most other items have not shown much change, with some such as the cost of taxes and wages not keeping up with the cost of living, remaining high, while others such as home foreclosure or the possibility of unemployment remaining relatively low.

About one-quarter of the sample reported receiving a salary increase or other income increase recently. Those who cited an income increase were much less likely to point to inflationary pressures: only 43 percent of such individuals said wages had not kept up with the cost of living, compared to 66 percent among those not receiving a recent income increase ($P < .01$). By comparison, there was no discernible difference between those who had recently found a new or better job and the propensity to say that they were facing the possibility of unemployment. "Those who had recently found a job were actually *more* likely to register economic anxiety, as they were more likely to cite a 'delay in making a major purchase' or affording the cost of taxes, transportation or utilities than those who did not recently find a new job," said Nataf.

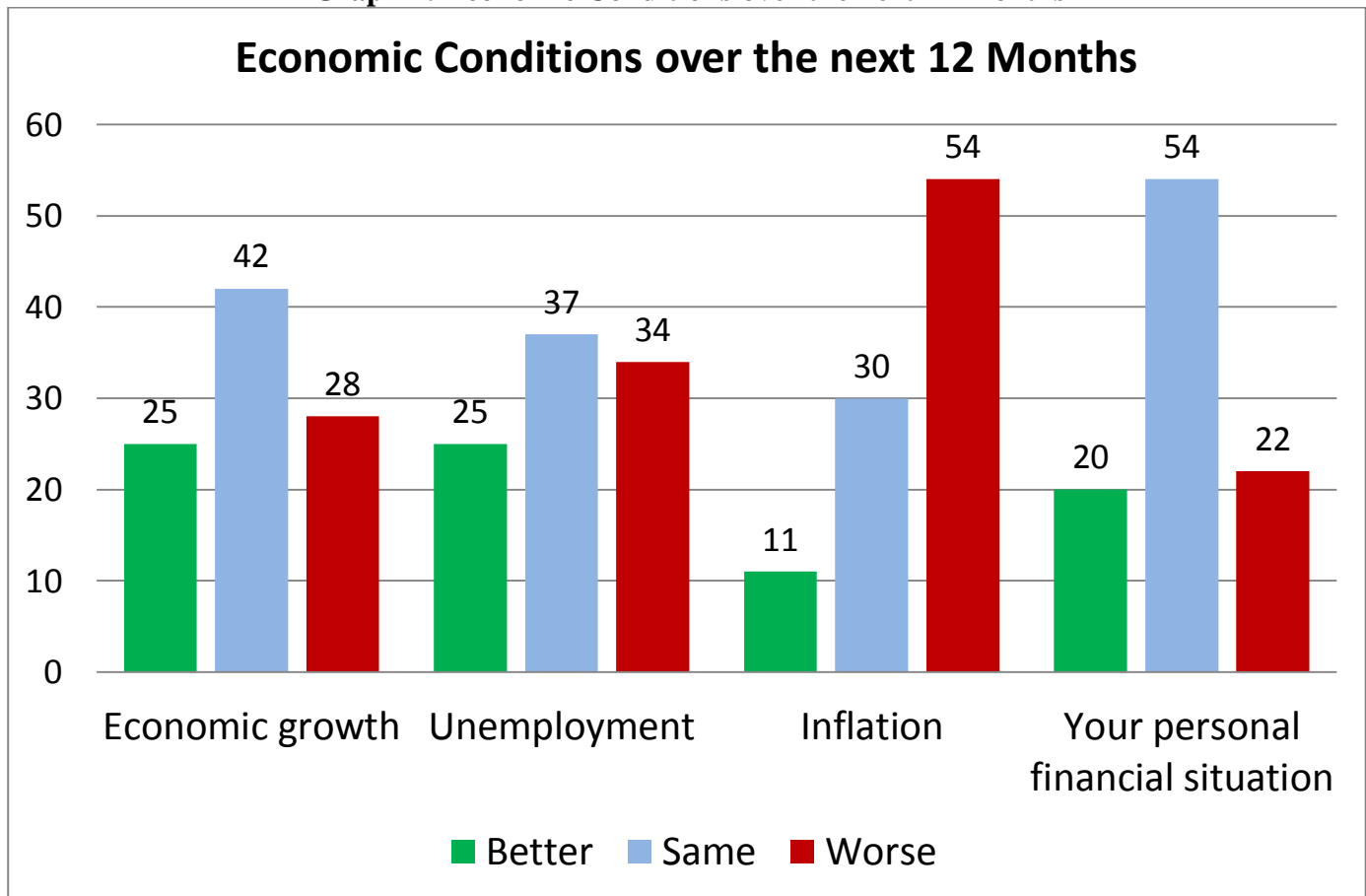
Consumer Confidence

Typical measures of consumer confidence use surveys to assess the public’s forecast of economic conditions over the next twelve months. For the first time, the fall CSLI survey included four questions meant to assess consumer confidence about the county’s economy. Table 4 and Graph 2 show the results.

Table 4: Economic Conditions over the next 12 Months

	Better	Same	Worse	Unsure/NA	Total
Economic growth	25	42	28	6	101
Unemployment	25	37	34	5	101
Inflation	11	30	54	5	100
Your personal financial situation	20	54	22	4	100

Graph 2: Economic Conditions over the next 12 Months



In all four cases, the percentages saying that conditions will be worse exceeded the percentage saying that conditions will be better. While the differences between these two values were relatively small regarding economic growth, unemployment and personal financial situation, inflation was five times more likely to be worse than better, according to the respondents.

The fear of inflation was much higher among those who had said that wages/salaries were not keeping up with the rise in the cost of living: 64 percent of those foresaw worsening inflation vs. 40 percent who did not cite this concern. Economic pessimism was demonstrated by the relationships among all four consumer confidence indicators: those fearing inflation were much more likely to worry about growth, unemployment and their personal financial situation. As shown on Table 5, those optimistic about inflation (saying ‘better’ or ‘same’) were unlikely to cite worsening conditions regarding growth, unemployment or personal finances.³

Table 5: Inflation vs. Growth, Unemployment and Personal Financial Situation

Inflation forecast =>	Better	Same	Worse
Those saying worse regarding...			
Economic growth	12	16	40
Unemployment	15	21	47
Your personal financial situation	2	14	32

Economic Downturn: Anne Arundel County and Maryland vs. Surrounding Counties and States

Another question focused on how respondents perceived Anne Arundel County and Maryland “in dealing with the economic downturn – better, about the same or worse” compared to other states or counties in the Mid-Atlantic area.

Responses were nearly identical for both jurisdictions, with Anne Arundel County faring a bit better than Maryland. Overall, respondents were two to three times more likely to say that Anne Arundel County and Maryland were doing ‘better’ rather than ‘worse’ although the modal response in both cases was ‘same.’ The exact percentages can be found on Table 6.

Table 6: Anne Arundel County and Maryland vs. Surrounding Jurisdictions

	Better	Same	Worse	Unsure/NA	Total
State of Maryland	32	46	14	7	99
Anne Arundel County	36	46	10	7	99

³ All these relationships were statistically significant: P<.01.

Natural Emergencies – Hurricanes and Earthquakes

Emergency Preparedness

This section of the survey referred “to events like the earthquake or hurricanes we experienced earlier this year.”

The first set of questions asked respondents about various ways in which they might prepare themselves for a natural emergency. Table 7 shows the percentages for each question.

Table 7: Various Preparations for Emergencies

	Yes	No	Unsure/NA	Total
Developed a family plan of action which all members of your family understand	52	48	1	101
Obtained and reviewed any guides to emergency preparedness.	52	48	0	100
Put together an emergency preparedness kit	49	50	1	100
Signed up for the County’s emergency notification system called “CodeRed”	13	85	2	100

About one-half of the sample claimed to have developed a family plan of action, reviewed guides to emergency preparedness and put together an emergency preparedness kit. The percentages of those claiming to have developed a family plan of action and an emergency preparedness kit were a bit lower than when CSLI last asked in fall 2003: 58 percent responded affirmatively to those questions at that time. Relatively few (13 percent) had signed up for the county’s emergency notification system.

Earthquake – Location, Planning and Communication

To better understand how different venues were prepared for an unexpected event like an earthquake, the survey asked first about a respondent’s location at the time of the Aug. 23, 2011 earthquake. As seen on Table 8, most people were at home (38 percent) or at work (34 percent). Respondents were then asked, “Where ever you were, was there a clear emergency plan at your location, or was there no real plan?”⁴ Table 8 shows the likelihood of respondents saying there was a plan based on their locations at the time of the earthquake.

Table 8: Location and Presence of a Plan at the time of the Earthquake

	% at this location	Plan	No Plan	Plan Unclear	Unsure/NA
Home	38	18	79	2	1
Work	34	34	61	5	1
School	3	31	46	15	8
Somewhere else	25	12	69	5	14

People were least likely to have a plan if they were at home (18 percent) or ‘somewhere else’ (12 percent). About one-third of those at work or school thought that their locations did have a plan. “This might point to a need to either establish or better communicate a plan in all locations, just in case some unexpected natural disaster might occur,” Nataf suggested.

⁴ Respondents were able to volunteer “There was a plan but no one knew it.” The relationship between location and presence of a plan was statistically significant (P<.01). Of the 25 percent who were ‘somewhere else,’ one quarter were in the car.

The survey was also focused on how respondents communicated with ‘friends and family’ after the earthquake, and more generally how respondents found out about the event. They were asked whether any of the following methods of communication were used: land line telephone, mobile phone, text message, email, or social media like Facebook or Twitter. If they affirmed the use of a method, they were asked, “Was this method successful?” Table 9 summarizes the results.

Table 9: Which Communication Method Used – How Successful was it?

Method	% Saying used	Successful	Not successful	Other/No answer
Mobile phone	66	40	55	5
Text message	42	57	30	14
Land line telephone	40	45	37	18
Email	25	27	41	32
Social media	19	25	40	35

The most used method for communicating after the earthquake was the mobile phone (66 percent). It was also the least successful method – with only 40 percent saying they could successfully complete the call. The second most commonly used method for communication was text messaging (42 percent); it was also the most successful method with 57 percent reporting success. Land line telephones (40 percent) were used nearly as often as text messages, although not as successfully (45 percent). Only 19 percent used social media, with a relatively low success rate (25 percent). “The high success rate of text messages suggests that emergency communications should depend on a variety of methods, without overreliance on a single one,” Nataf said.

As a follow-up to the question about communicating with friends and family, the survey asked an open-ended question: “What method, if any, did you use to find out more about the earthquake shortly after it occurred?” The open-ended format lent itself to a variety of answers, from those indicating a specific tool of communication (television, radio, Internet) and others saying “news.” Multiple answers were not uncommon as well. Table 10 lists the percentage of those mentioning any of the methods.

Table 10: How did Respondents find out about the Earthquake?

Method	% Saying used
TV	45
Internet	25
Radio	13
“News”	8
Mobile phone	3
Text messages	2
Social media	2
Word of mouth	1
Total	99

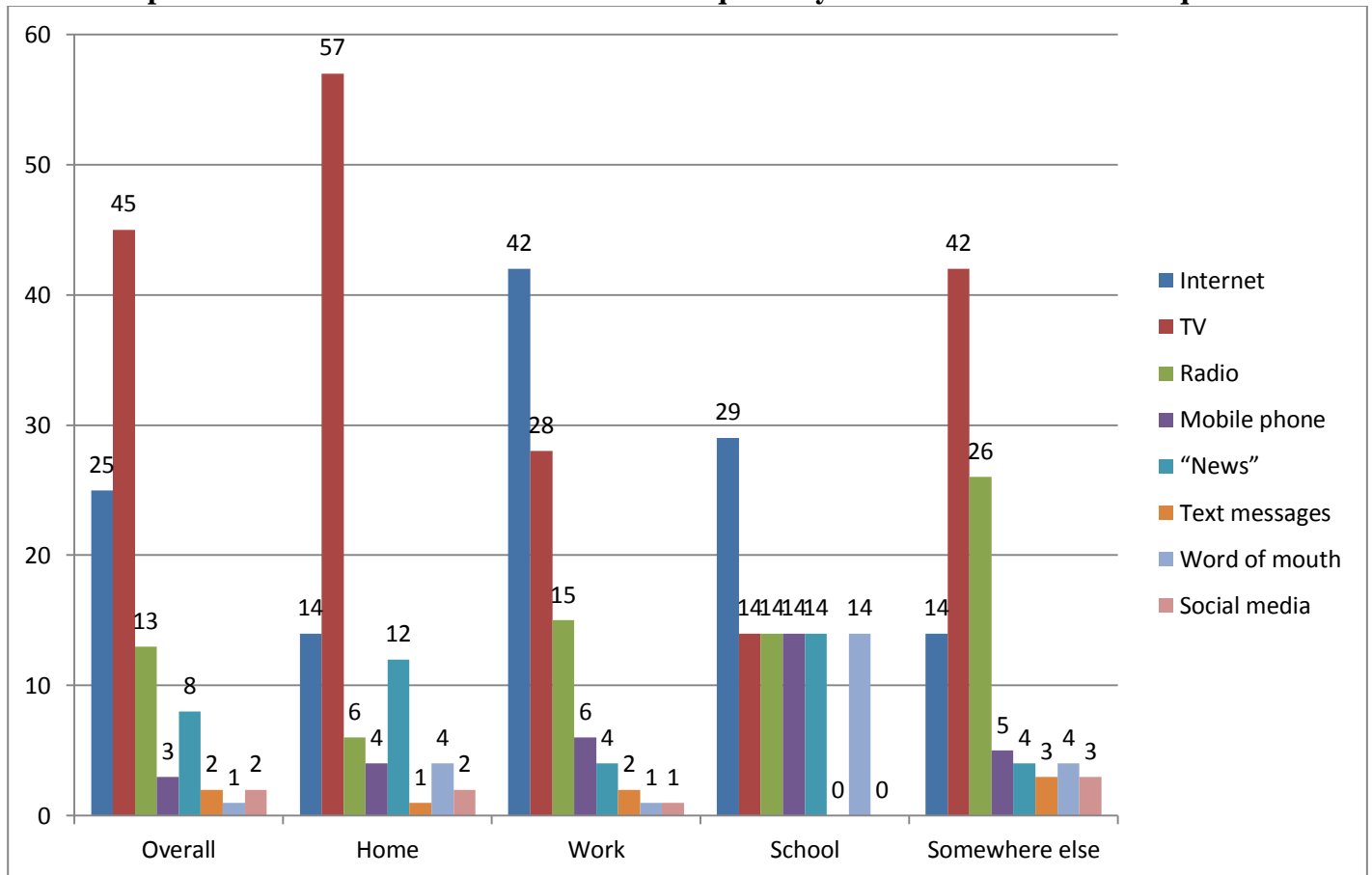
Television (45 percent) dominated the other methods of communication, followed by the Internet (25 percent) and radio (13 percent).

Table 11: Method Used to find out about Earthquake by Location at time of Earthquake

Method	Overall	Home	Work	School	Somewhere else
Internet	25	14	42	29	14
TV	45	57	28	14	42
Radio	13	6	15	14	26
Mobile phone	3	4	6	14	5
“News”	8	12	4	14	4
Text messages	2	1	2	0	3
Word of mouth	1	4	1	14	4
Social media	2	2	1	0	3
Total percentage	99	100	99	99	101
N=	421	171	137	7	106

Graph 3 and Table 11 show how the different methods were distributed across various locations. Those who were at home were most likely to use the television (57 percent); all other methods paled by comparison. Those at work were most likely to use the Internet (42 percent) as were those at school (29 percent). Those who were ‘somewhere else’ gravitated to television (42 percent) and radio (26 percent). Other methods were far less frequently cited.

Graph 3: Method Used to find out about Earthquake by Location at time of Earthquake



Hurricane – Was Residence Damaged?

Prior to entering into the questions dealing with BGE, a set of questions was asked regarding possible damage to respondents' residences. Nearly one-quarter (24 percent) said that the hurricanes caused some damage. They were then asked about their satisfaction with their insurers – one third of those responding said that they were satisfied (see Table 12). This was followed by an open-ended question asked only of those saying they were not satisfied inquiring about the cause of their dissatisfaction. Only 22 respondents offered a reason, with several saying that the insurer took too long to process their claims, didn't provide sufficient coverage (e.g., for water/flood damage) or reimbursement, or were treated unpleasantly.

Table 12: Damage from Storms; Satisfaction with Insurer

	Yes	No	No answer	Total
Damage from storms	24	75	--	99
Satisfaction with insurer (N=114)	33	30	38	101

BGE – Outages, Response, Exelon Power

Given the severity of the two hurricanes which visited Anne Arundel County, the survey turned to power outages and BGE's performance.

Most people (66 percent) experienced a power outage "for more than a few moments." As seen in Table 13, most people had outages that lasted no more than four days, although one quarter experienced outages lasting at least five days.

Table 13: How Long did your Power Outage Last?

Length of outage	Percentage
Under 24 hours	24
1 to 2 days	20
3 to 4 days	31
5 to 6 days	19
More than 6 days	6
Total	100

N=296

Table 14 shows that most respondents (67 percent) thought BGE had responded effectively *after* the storms hit. A lower percentage (52 percent) thought that the company "did all it could to lower the impact of the hurricanes before they hit." Only one fifth were willing to pay "an additional fee dedicated to improving BGE reliability." While most respondents (42 percent) felt that the purchase of BGE by Exelon Power would have "no impact" upon "the quality of BGE services," many respondents were unsure or could offer no answer (31 percent). Of those who were inclined to say that the purchase would either improve or worsen the quality of BGE's service, twice as many (18 percent) said 'worsen' than 'improve' (9 percent).

Table 14: BGE Effectiveness After and Before Hurricanes

	Yes	No	No answer	Total
Was BGE effective after hurricanes hit the area	67	24	10	101
Did BGE do all it could to lower the impact before hurricanes hit	52	26	22	100

When looking at the impact of power outages upon the perception of BGE’s effectiveness, clearly those who experienced longer outages were less impressed with BGE’s service than those who experienced no or shorter outages (see Table 15). This pattern was more pronounced for the question asking about BGE’s performance after the hurricanes rather than before.

Table 15: BGE Effectiveness After and Before Hurricanes by Power Outage Experience

	No outage	Percentages saying “Yes”				
		Under 24 hours	1 to 2 days	3 to 4 days	5 to 6 days	More than 6 days
Was BGE effective after hurricanes hit the area P<.01	63	89	71	68	53	53
Did BGE do all it could to lower the impact before hurricanes hit P<.03	53	64	50	50	39	50

Other Findings

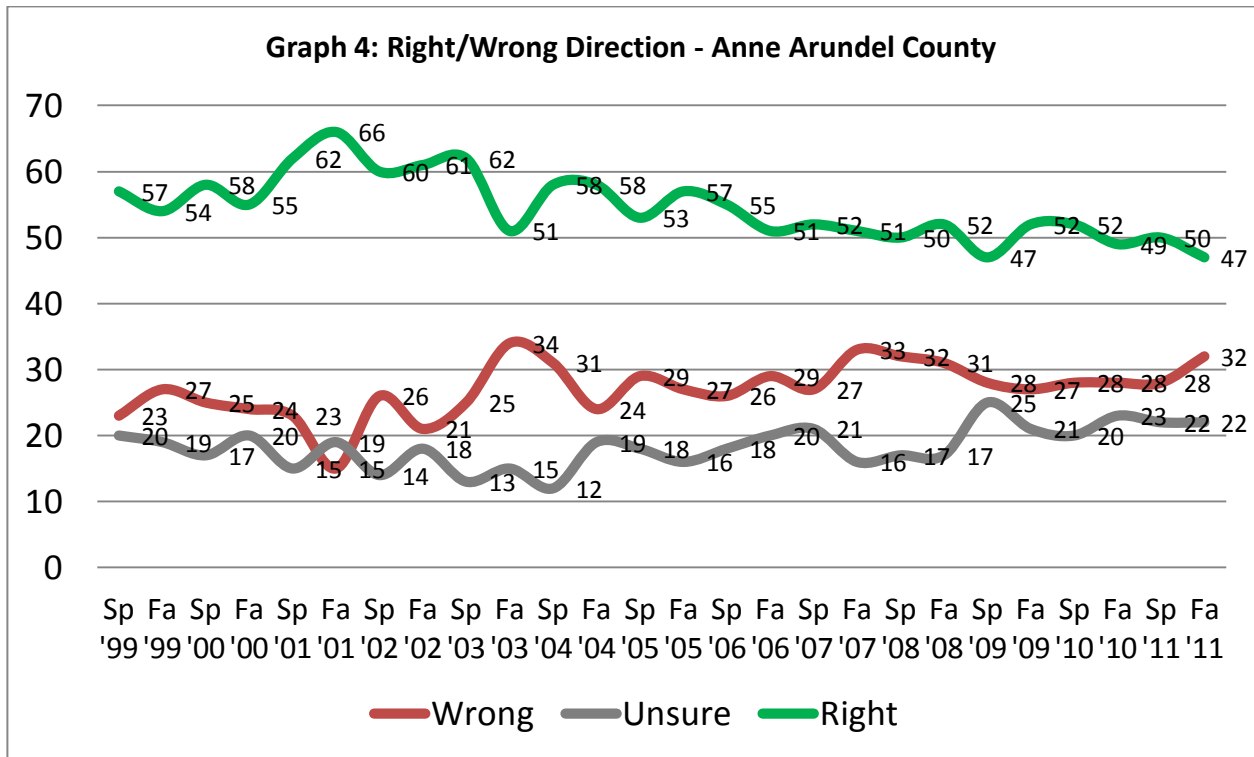
County – Right or Wrong Direction?

The survey included a CSLI benchmark question whose results are seen on Table 16: “Overall, would you say that the county is headed in the right direction or in the wrong direction?”

Table 16 and Graph 4 show that there was some downward movement in this indicator, which has been generally quite stable over the last few years. This fall, the ‘right direction’ percentage dropped from 50 to 47 percent, tying the previous low registered in spring 2009.

Table 16: Anne Arundel County - Right vs. Wrong Direction

Response	Fall 2009	Spring 2010	Fall 2010	Spring 2011	Fall 2011
Right direction	52	52	49	50	47
Wrong direction	27	28	28	28	32
Unsure	21	20	23	22	22
Total	100	100	100	100	101



Policy Proposals – Maryland or Anne Arundel County Government

The survey asked about some policy proposals meant to “replenish Maryland’s Transportation Trust Fund,” inquiring whether respondents supported each proposal (see Table 17).

Table 17: Support for Proposals meant to Replenish Maryland’s Transportation Trust Fund

Proposal	Support	Oppose	Unsure/NA
Increase the toll on the Bay Bridge from \$2.50 to \$4.00	33	64	4
Create a new tax on ownership of vehicles	10	86	4
Increase the state’s property tax, adding \$63 million to the fund	11	86	3
Increase the corporate income tax rate by one percent, adding \$100 million to the fund	57	39	4

The results showed that only an increase in the corporate income tax rate was supported by a majority (57 percent) of respondents. The resistance to broad-based tax increases was clear as only about one tenth of the sample supported new taxes on vehicle ownership or increases in the state’s property tax. The resistance was similar to that shown in the March 2011 CSLI survey which asked about increasing the gas tax: only 17 percent supported the proposal at that time.

President Obama – Job Approval

Since fall 2006, CSLI polls 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 Oct. 11-14 indicated that 40 percent approved of the

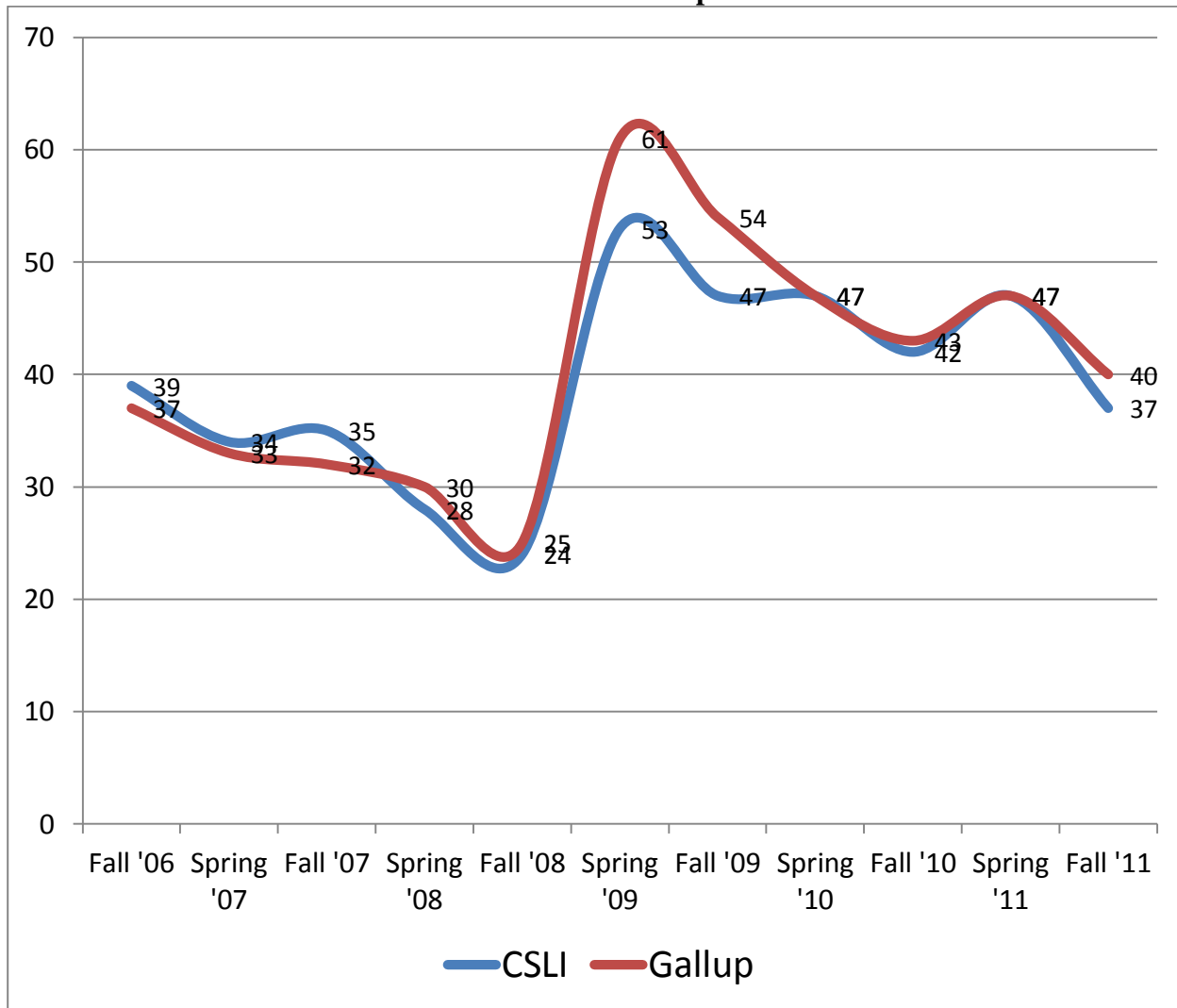
⁵ See <http://www.gallup.com/poll/113980/gallup-daily-obama-job-approval.aspx>

president’s performance. CSLI’s own polling revealed a percentage that was slightly lower: 37 percent (see Table 18 and Graph 5).

Table 18: Job Approval for Presidents Bush and Obama

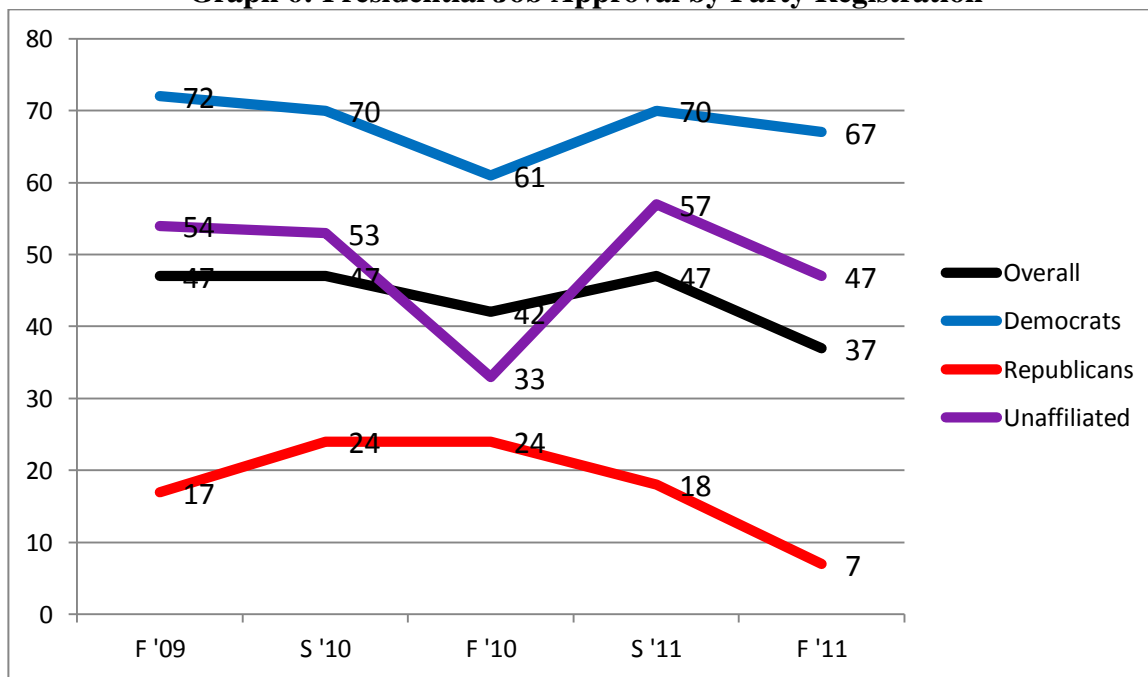
Issue	Fall 2007	Spring 2008	Fall 2008	Spring 2009	Fall 2009	Spring 2010	Fall 2010	Spring 2011	Fall 2011
Approve	35	28	24	53	47	47	42	47	37
Disapprove	57	62	69	31	42	45	49	44	56
No answer	9	10	8	16	11	8	10	9	7
Total	101	100	101	100	100	100	101	100	100

Graph 5: Presidential Job Approval – CSLI and Selected Gallup 2006-2011



As seen on Graph 6, Obama’s popularity among Democrats declined from last spring, dropping from 70 to 67 percent. Among Republicans, Obama’s approval hit a new low: 7 percent. Among unaffiliated voters, Obama also experienced a drop from 57 to 47 percent.

Graph 6: Presidential Job Approval by Party Registration



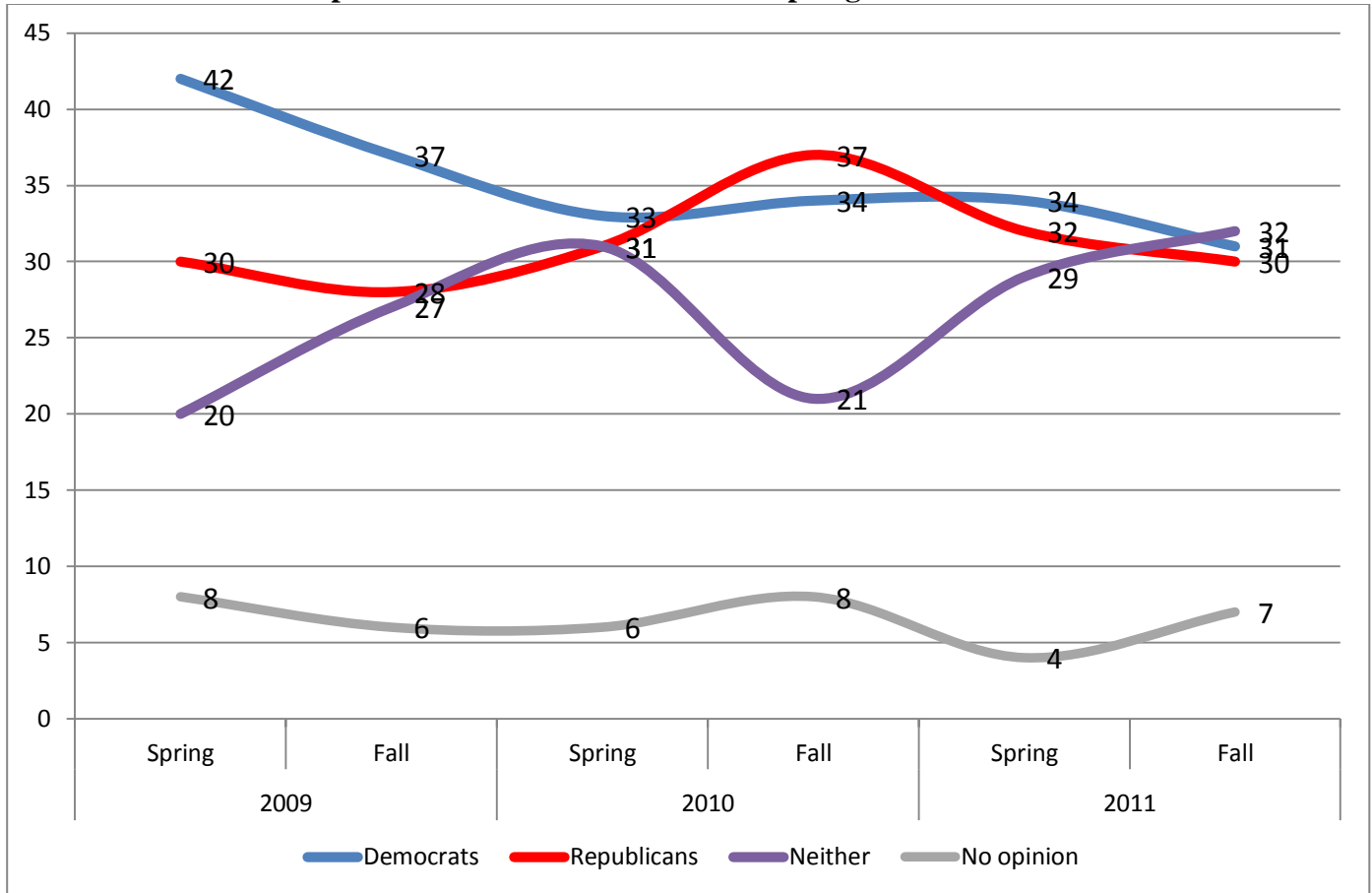
Trust in Political Parties

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 19 (and Graph 7) shows that the parties have not been enjoying much confidence: for the first time, the percentage saying “neither” – which is a volunteered response not solicited by the interviewers – was greater than the percentage favoring either party. For Democrats, this corresponded to an 11 point decline since their high point in spring 2009; for Republicans, it was a 7 point drop since their successful election period in fall 2010.

Table 19: Which Party do you Trust?

	2009		2010		2011	
	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall
Democrats	42	37	33	34	34	31
Republicans	30	28	31	37	32	30
Neither	20	27	31	21	29	32
No opinion	8	6	6	8	4	7
Total	100	100	101	100	99	100

Graph 7: Trust in Political Parties – Spring 2009 to Fall 2011



Methodology

The survey polled a random sample of 487 county residents who were at least 18 years old. It was conducted Oct.10-13, 2011 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 4.44 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, 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/csli.

Appendix A: Questionnaire

CSLI Semi-Annual Survey – Fall, 2011

(All numeric values in answer categories are percentages unless otherwise indicated)

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/Drugs	8
Economy – (e.g., no jobs, high cost of living, business closing or losses)	48
Education, problems with schools	5
Environment (e.g., air or water pollution, saving the Bay)	2
Government – corrupt, unethical	2
Government – inefficient, wasteful, spends too much	2
Government – lacks resources for roads, schools, services	2
Growth/overpopulation- too much development	4
Healthcare (cost, access)	1
Taxes – too high	9
Transportation problems/traffic congestion	5
Other answer (write in:	4
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 **32%**
- (0) **Unsure** or don't know **22%**

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 **4%** (2) Good **44%** (3) Only Fair **40%** (4) Poor **11%** (0) Unsure, no answer **2%**

3.1 How about economic conditions in Maryland?

- (1) Excellent **1%** (2) Good **32%** (3) Only Fair **41%** (4) Poor **24%** (0) Unsure, no answer **2%**

3.2 How about economic conditions in the United States?

- (1) Excellent **2%** (2) Good **7%** (3) Only Fair **28%** (4) Poor **62%** (0) Unsure, no answer **2%**

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	39	2
4.1a Received a salary increase or other increase in income recently	26	71	3
4.2 Facing the possibility of unemployment	21	75	5
4.2a Found a new or better job recently	14	83	3
4.3 Significant losses in your stock or retirement accounts	60	38	3
4.4 Facing the possibility of house foreclosure or loss	8	91	1
4.5 Unable to find affordable housing	11	87	2
4.6 Hard to afford the cost of transportation	30	69	1
4.7 Hard to afford the cost of utilities such as electricity or gas	39	61	1
4.8 Delay in making a major purchase such as a home or car	51	48	1
4.9 Health care insurance is unavailable, too expensive or inadequate	32	66	2
4.10 Taxes are too high in relation to government services provided	58	36	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	25	42	28	6
5.2 Unemployment	25	37	34	5
5.3 Inflation	11	30	54	5
5.4 Your personal financial situation	20	54	22	4

6. Compared to other states or counties in the Mid-Atlantic region, how do you think Maryland and Anne Arundel County are doing in dealing with the economic downturn – better, about the same, or worse? First, how is Maryland doing... (and how about Anne Arundel County?)

	Better	Same	Worse	Unsure/NA
6.1 State of Maryland	32	46	14	7
6.2 Anne Arundel County	36	46	10	7

7. Several proposals have been discussed to replenish Maryland’s Transportation Trust Fund; when I mention a proposal say whether you support or oppose it.

Proposal	Support	Oppose	Unsure/NA
7.1 Increase the toll on the Bay Bridge from \$2.50 to \$4.00	33	64	4
7.2 Create a new tax on ownership of vehicles	10	86	4
7.3 Increase the state’s property tax, adding \$63 million to the fund	11	86	3
7.4 Increase the corporate income tax rate by one percent, adding \$100 million to the fund	57	39	4

The next few questions refer to events like the earthquake or hurricanes we experienced earlier this year.

8. Have you done any of the following to prepare for such a natural emergency...

	Yes	No	Unsure/NA
8.1 Developed a family plan of action which all members of your family understand	52	48	1
8.2 Obtained and reviewed any guides to emergency preparedness	52	48	0
8.3 Put together an emergency preparedness kit	49	50	1
8.4 Signed up for the County’s emergency notification system called “CodeRed” (link can be found on Anne Arundel County homepage)	13	85	2

If you were in the area during the earthquake August 23, please answer the following questions: (if not in the area go to question 13).

9. Where exactly were you at the time of the earthquake – home, work, school, or somewhere else?

(1) Home **38%** (2) Work **34%** (3) School **3%**(4) Somewhere else **25%**

10. Where ever you were, was there a clear emergency plan at your location, or was there no real plan?

(1) There was a plan **23%** (2) No real plan **69%** (3) There was a plan but no one knew it (volunteered) **4%** (4) Other/NA **4%**

11. Which, if any, of the following methods did you use to try and make contact with friends or family shortly after the earthquake: (circle all items respondent mentions, then ask if method was successful)

11.1 Land line telephone	(1) Yes 40% (2) No 60%	11.1a Was this method successful? (1) Yes 45% (2) No 37% (0) NA 18%
11.2 Mobile phone	(1) Yes 66% (2) No 34%	11.2a Was this method successful? (1) Yes 40% (2) No 55% (0) NA 5%
11.3 Text message	(1) Yes 42% (2) No 58%	11.3a Was this method successful? (1) Yes 57% (2) No 30% (0) NA 14%
11.4 Email	(1) Yes 25% (2) No 75%	11.4a Was this method successful? (1) Yes 27% (2) No 41% (0) NA 32%
11.5 Social media such as Facebook/ Twitter	(1) Yes 19% (2) No 81%	11.5a Was this method successful? (1) Yes 25% (2) No 40% (0) NA 35%

12. What method, if any, did you use to find out more about the earthquake shortly after it occurred?

Television: **45%** Internet: **25%** Radio: **13%** "News": **8%** Cell phone: **3%** Text messaging: **2%** Social media: **2%** Word of mouth **1%**

13. Regarding Hurricanes Irene or Lee...

13.1 Did your residence suffer any damages? (1) No **75%** (go to 13.3) (2) Yes **24%** (go to 13.2)



13.2 IF YES

=> *Were you satisfied with your experience with your insurer, if any?*

(1) Yes **33%** (2) No **30%** (0) NA **38%**

If NO, why not? _____ see notes in text _____

=> **13.3 Did your power go out for more than a few moments – and if so, for how long?**

(1) Yes it went out (go to 13.4) **66%** (2) No it didn't go out (go to 13.5) **34%**



13.4. (1) Under 24 hours **24% (2) 1 to 2 days **20%****

(3) 3 to 4 days **31% (4) 5 to 6 days **19%** (5) More than 6 days **6%****

13.5. Do you believe that BGE...

13.5a. *Responded effectively after the storms hit?* (1)Yes **67%** (2)No **24%** (0) Unsure/NA **10%**

13.5b *Did all it could to lower the impact of the hurricanes before they hit?*

(1)Yes **52%** (2)No **26%** (0) Unsure/NA **22%**

13.5c. Would you be in favor of paying an additional fee dedicated to improving BGE reliability?

(1) Yes **20%** (2) No **73%** (0) Unsure/NA **7%**

13.5d Do you think that the proposed purchase of BGE's parent company, Constellation, by Exelon Power would improve, worsen or have no impact on the quality of BGE's services?

(1) Improve **9%** (2) Worsen **18%** (3) No impact **42%** (0) No answer, unsure **31%**

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

(1) Approve **37%** (2) Disapprove **56%** (0) No answer **7%**

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 **31%** (2) Republicans **30%** (3) Neither (volunteered) **32%** (4) Other (volunteered) **2%**
(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 **40%** (4) None (NOT REGISTERED TO VOTE) **7%**
(2) Republican **37%** (5) Other (e.g., Green Party) **2%**
(3) Unaffiliated (or "independent") **12%** (0) No Answer **5%**

17.0 If respondents say Democrat or Republican, ask:

Do you consider yourself to be a strong, weak or independent (name of party – Democrat/Republican)?

(1) Strong **36%** (2) Weak **8%** (3) Independent **50%** (0) No answer **5%**

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

(1) Conservative **37%** (2) Moderate **45%** (3) Liberal **16%** (0) Other, No Answer **2%**

19. What is your age? _____

18-30 = **9%** 31-40=**11%** 41-50=**22%** 51-60=**19%** 61-65=**11%** 66 and over= **23%**
 (0) No Answer = **5%**

20. 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 23%
(2) a high school diploma 15%	(6) post graduate work 24%
(3) some college 18%	(7) Something else? 3%
(4) Completed a 2 year associate college degree 15%	(0) No Answer 0%

21. 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 **14%**
- (3) \$50,001 to \$75,000 **16%**
- (4) \$75,001-\$100,000 **17%**
- (5) \$100,001-\$150,000 **15%**
- (6) Over \$150,000 **14%**
- (0) No Answer **14%**

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

Answer choice	Percentage
Retired and not employed	25
Retired and working part-time	8
Employed full time for a company in the private sector	28
Employed full time for government in a non-defense related activity such as education, public works or public safety	13
Employed full time in a defense related activity	8
Employed in a private non-profit organization	3
Employed part time	5
Student	1
Unemployed and seeking a job	3
Unemployed and not seeking a job	2
No answer	0

23. Regarding race, how would you describe yourself?

- (1) White **83%**
- (2) Black or African American **9%**
- (3) Hispanic or Latino **2%**
- (4) Asian **1%**
- (5) Other **3%**
- (0) No answer **2%**

24. Regarding religion, how would you describe yourself?

- (1) None **6%**
- (2) Non-practicing **7%**
- (3) Evangelical or born again Christian (possibly Baptist, Pentecostal) **17%**
- (4) Catholic **24%**
- (5) Jewish **2%**
- (6) Protestant (possibly Lutherans, Methodists, Presbyterian, Anglican, Episcopalian) **24%**
- (7) Some other Christian **8%**
- (8) A 'spiritual person' not associated with an organized religion **1%**
- (9) Other (e.g., Hindu, Muslim) **6%**
- (0) No Answer **5%**

25. What is your current marital status?

- (1) Single **15%** (2) Married **68%** (3) Separated/divorced **6%** (4) Widowed **7%** (5) Other **1%**
- (0) No answer **2%**

26. 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 **32%** (2) No **68%**

26.1 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

27. Gender of respondent to whom you were speaking:

Before weighting: **Male 39% Female 61%**
After weighting: **Male 50% Female 50%**

28. Zip code _____

28 Zip code

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	20711	6	1.2
	20724	3	.6
	20733	4	.8
	20751	5	1.0
	20755	2	.4
	20764	2	.4
	20765	1	.2
	20776	3	.6
	20778	1	.2
	21012	24	5.1
	21032	13	2.8
	21035	8	1.7
	21037	14	2.9
	21043	1	.3
	21054	13	2.7
	21056	1	.2
	21060	14	2.8
	21061	41	8.6
	21064	1	.2
	21076	8	1.8
	21078	1	.3
	21090	9	1.9
	21108	22	4.7
	21113	28	5.8
	21114	29	6.1
	21122	65	13.8
	21140	5	1.1
	21144	23	4.9
	21146	38	8.1
	21226	3	.7
	21401	35	7.2
	21402	1	.2
	21403	31	6.5
	21405	1	.3
21407	1	.3	
21409	18	3.8	
Total	476*	100.0	

*Note: 476 is weighted total; 487 is unweighted total.