

Press Release: October 28, 2008
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Local Survey Shows Growing Public Anxiety over the Economy

A survey of 579 Anne Arundel County residents conducted Oct. 20-23 by the students of the Center for the Study of Local Issues (CSLI) at Anne Arundel Community College found that the sharp rise in the public’s concern over the economy discovered last spring continued into the fall.

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 top four issues have been growth/transportation, education, crime and taxes. The percentage citing the economy last spring nearly tripled from October 2007 to March 2008, rising from 8 to 23 percent.¹ This fall, the percentage citing the economy reached the highest level (38 percent) for any single item polled by the center since at least 1995.

The percentage saying “taxes” dropped from 16 to 12 percent.

Table 1: “Most Important Problem” Fall 2003 to Fall 2008

Problem	Fall '03	Spring '04	Fall '04	Spring '05	Fall '05	Spring '06	Fall '06	Spring '07	Fall '07	Spring '08	Fall '08	Mean
Economy	8	12	8	7	7	15	7	12	8	23	38	13
Taxes – too high	14	13	10	13	10	10	9	15	17	16	12	13
Growth/development	15	8	14	18	22	16	21	16	16	12	9	15
Education	17	22	12	16	12	13	16	12	12	12	10	14
Traffic congestion/problems	11	10	17	9	14	9	12	11	12	7	6	11
Crime	5	4	6	5	6	11	11	9	10	6	4	7
Unsure/no answer	9	10	13	11	11	8	7	9	6	9	7	9
Other answer	21	21	20	21	18	18	17	16	19	15	14	18
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

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.

Other Measures Reinforce Perception of Economic Anxiety

Since March 2002 the CSLI 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?”

Historically, the percentage saying a combined “excellent” or “good” has hovered around 70 percent. As shown on Table 2 and Graph 1, last spring the percentage dropped to 55 percent which equaled the lowest value previously obtained (March 2003) since this question became a regular part of the survey in 2002. That record was shattered this fall as the value dropped to 49 percent. The percentage citing “poor” also reached a new record: 12 percent.

Dan Nataf, Ph.D., center director, noted that “these results show an unparalleled level of economic pessimism about the economy. Economic optimism has dropped 20 points in just a year and lies 15 points below the historic average.”

Nataf continued by saying that “the decline in public confidence in the economy has paralleled national trends: in October 2007, 33 percent of those asked by the Gallup organization said that the national economy was excellent or good; that percentage has dropped to only 5 percent in Gallup polling for Oct. 10-12 – a 28-point drop.”

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	Mean
Excellent+ Good	66	55	56	62	74	74	71	74	71	71	69	55	49	65
Excellent	6	5	5	7	9	12	15	14	9	12	10	6	6	9
Good	60	50	51	55	65	62	56	60	62	59	59	49	43	56
Fair	27	36	35	32	22	22	22	23	23	22	25	36	37	28
Poor	4	6	7	4	4	3	6	2	3	4	5	8	12	5
Don't know	3	2	2	2	1	2	1	1	3	3	2	2	2	2
Total	100	99	100	100	101	101	100	100	100	100	101	101	100	100

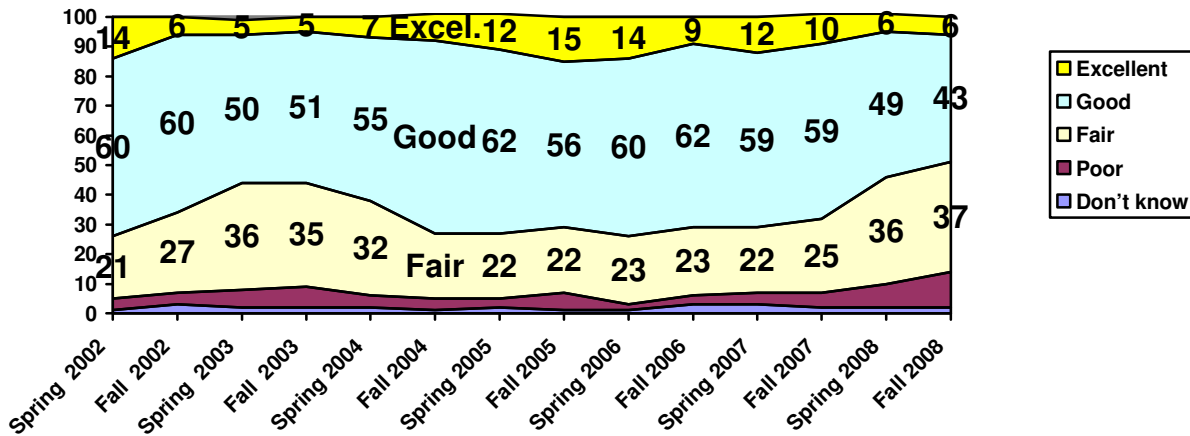
The fall CSLI survey also asked respondents to rate economic conditions in the country. As with the Gallup poll, 5 percent of respondents described the national economy as excellent or good” (see Table 3). County residents were not quite as pessimistic as national respondents in the Gallup poll, in which 73 percent asserted that the country’s economy was in ‘poor’ condition, compared to only 59 percent in the CSLI poll.

“The relative robustness of the local economy probably diminished the degree of pessimism expressed by those in our sample,” Nataf commented.

Table 3: Perceptions of National Economic Conditions

Condition	Fall 2008
Excellent+Good	5
Excellent	1
Good	4
Fair	36
Poor	59
Don't know	1
Total	101

Graph 1: Economic Conditions



A battery of questions focused on specific aspects of economic distress and included inflation, stock/retirement losses, unemployment, house foreclosure, the affordability of housing, the cost of transportation as well as utilities and taxes. In addition, the survey asked a question about availability, cost and adequacy of health insurance. This set of questions was similar to a set asked last spring.

Respondents were asked: “Thinking about your personal circumstances, please tell me whether any of these economic conditions apply to you or your household.” Table 4 shows the results for both spring and fall 2008.

Table 4: Economic Conditions Applying to Personal Circumstances

Condition	Applies Spring 2008	Applies Fall 2008	Fall- Spring
Significant losses in stocks or retirement accounts	n.a.	71	n.a.
Hard to afford cost of utilities such as electricity or gas	61	50	-11
Wages or salaries are not rising as fast as the cost of living	56	59	+3
Hard to afford cost of taxes	47	58	+11
Hard to afford cost of transportation	40	32	-8
Health care insurance is unavailable, too expensive or inadequate	35	30	-5
Unable to find affordable housing	21	11	-10
Facing the possibility of unemployment	11	15	+4
Facing the possibility of house foreclosure or loss	6	4	-2

Some items were less acute than last spring. There was less concern about the cost of utilities, the cost of transportation, and the ability to find affordable housing. Inflation concerns went up a bit (from 56 to 59 percent). Tax concerns rose considerably (11 percent), but this may have been due to a wording change.² There was a slight rise in concern about unemployment (4 percent).

“These changes signal a continuing concern about inflationary pressures upon residents’ budgets. Offsetting these concerns might be a possible decrease in housing values, which appears to have made it a bit less difficult to find affordable housing,” Nataf said.

The new item included in the fall survey was meant to reflect the recent fall in stock prices. Nearly three-quarters of the respondents (71 percent) agreed that they had experienced “significant losses in stocks or retirement accounts,” which is the single most commonly experienced item. Those rating the national economy as poor were much more likely to cite this item (73 percent) compared to those rating the economy as good (50 percent).

“Clearly, losses in the stock markets or in retirement accounts have contributed significantly to the pessimism people feel about the economy,” said Nataf.

Slightly under one-third (30 percent) of the sample agreed that “health care insurance is unavailable, too expensive or inadequate.” Nataf said that “while this percentage has dropped a bit since spring (5 percent), the cost and adequacy of the coverage remain a salient concern for many.”

In keeping with the economic focus, the fall survey asked about residents’ confidence in “moves taken by the federal government in response to the financial crisis.” As seen in Table 5, a majority were “not very confident” that the various measures undertaken by the federal government would resolve the financial crisis.

² The fall survey used the question “Taxes are too high relative to what is received from government services such as education, roads and safety” while in spring the question was “hard to afford the cost of taxes.”

Table 5: Confidence in Moves taken by the Federal Government

Confidence Level	Fall 2008
Very confident	5
Somewhat confident	40
Not very confident	53
Unsure	3
Don't know	0
Total	101

“People who expressed the least confidence were consistently more likely to say that various economic conditions such as unemployment, inflation, and stock losses had affected them,” Nataf remarked.

Summary of Other Findings

The CSLI survey evaluated a range of other issues including issues affecting Anne Arundel County dealing with various fees, taxes on hotel stays and restrictions on development. State issues included slots and lowering the drinking age. There were various questions about the presidential elections as well.

Right direction/wrong direction: There was little change in the percentage saying that the county was moving in the right direction – 52 percent – compared to 50 percent last March.

Ambulance fee: A majority (67 percent) opposed a \$500 ambulance fee to help pay for county services.

Sports leagues, park fees: Half of the sample favored “creating or increasing fees to sports leagues that use public parks to cover the cost of maintenance of those parks.”

Increasing impact fees: Two-thirds (63 percent) said they would favor “increasing impact fees on new construction in our county.”

Increase hotel tax: Only about a third (33 percent) favored increasing “the tax on hotel stays from 7 percent to 10 percent.”

Illegal immigration: A large majority (70 percent) favored “efforts by police to identify illegal immigrants and refer them to federal immigration services.”

Environmental measures: An overwhelming majority (84 percent) favored “environmental measures meant to restrict development in the critical areas.”

Drinking Age: Less than one third (29 percent) favored “decreasing the drinking age to 18.”

Wind turbines: A majority (80 percent) favored making it “easier to install wind turbines to generate energy, even in scenic places like across the river from Annapolis where the old radio antennas are located or in state parks in Western Maryland.”

Slots Referendum: A majority (52 percent) said that they would be voting in favor of the slots referendum listed as question 2 on the Nov. 4 ballot.

President George W. Bush’s job approval: There was a drop in President Bush’s job approval from 28 percent last March to only 24 percent saying “approve” this October.

Presidential election preferences: The presidential election was exceptionally close, with a weighted sample saying that there were about equally likely to support Barack Obama (40 percent) as John McCain (41 percent).

Methodology: The survey polled a random sample of 579 county residents who were at least 18 years old. It was conducted Oct. 20-23, 2008, 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 5 percent statistical margin of error for the overall sample; the error rate was higher for subgroups such as “Democrats.” The dataset was weighted only by gender to better represent the general population for those questions that did not involve the presidential elections. In the case of the latter, party and gender were both used to weight the sample. 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 Web site for results from previous surveys: www.aacc.edu/csli.

Main Findings

County – Right or Wrong Direction?

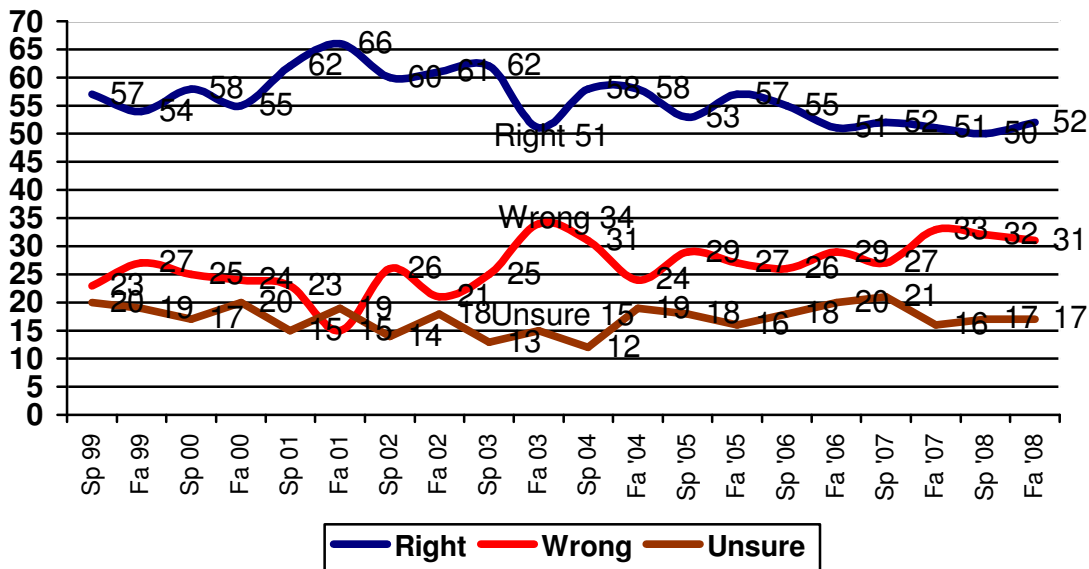
The survey included a CSLI benchmark question whose results are seen on Table 6: “Overall, would you say that the county is headed in the right direction or in the wrong direction?”

Graph 2 shows there was little change from last year. In March 2008, the “right direction” stood at 50 percent; it rose to 52 percent in fall to 52 percent. “The resiliency of ‘right direction’ answers given the level of economic pessimism was surprising and suggests that respondents compartmentalize their views of the county from conclusions about the economy,” said Nataf.

Table 6: Anne Arundel County - Right vs. Wrong Direction

Response	Percent
Right direction	52
Wrong direction	31
Unsure	17
Total	100

Graph 2: County Trend - Right or Wrong Direction



County Issues (see Table 7 for percentages)

Ambulance Fee

Residents were not inclined to support a proposal to raise county revenue by charging a \$500 fee to pay for ambulance services, rejecting this proposal (67 percent opposing).

Fees for Sports Leagues using County Parks

Sentiments were mixed on this issue, with half (50 percent) favoring such fees, but a large minority (45 percent) opposing them. Support for this measure was lowest among younger adults whose ages (between 31 and 50) increased their likelihood of having children in sports leagues (support for this measure dropped to 46 percent).

Impact Fees

Raising impact fees has been popular in past CSLI polls; the fall survey was no exception. A 2-1 ratio of respondents favored increasing the fees (63 vs. 31 percent). In fall 2003, residents were asked whether they supported “increasing impact fees on new housing development;” 65 percent agreed.

“Impact fees burden those preferring to purchase new residential housing. These may include those who both seek to move to or within the county. Either way, apparently most respondents don’t see themselves as falling into that category – or see the impact fee as justified given their feelings about limiting development and having new development pay for itself,” Nataf said.

Table 7: County Issues

	Support	Oppose	Unsure	No answer	Total
A \$500 ambulance fee to help pay for county services?	26	67	6	1	100
Creating or increasing fees to sports leagues that use public parks to cover the maintenance of those parks?	50	45	4	1	100
Increasing impact fees on new construction in our county?	63	31	5	1	100
Increasing the tax on hotel stays from 7 percent to 10 percent	33	59	6	1	99
Efforts by police to identify illegal immigrants and refer them to federal immigration services?	70	25	4	1	100
Environmental measures meant to restrict development in critical areas?	84	11	3	1	99
Decreasing the drinking age to 18	29	68	2	1	100

Hotel Tax

Despite the fact that tourists rather than Anne Arundel County residents would predominantly pay a hotel tax, a majority (59 percent) opposed increasing the tax from 7 to 10 percent. Ideological conservatives were especially likely to oppose such a tax increase (69 percent).

Police to Identify Illegal Immigrants

A large majority (70 percent) of respondents favored the idea of having police identify illegal immigrants and refer them to federal immigration services. Republicans were more likely to support this measure (80 percent) than were Democrats (58 percent).

Environmental Measures Restricting Development

Efforts to restrict development are typically popular in CSLI surveys and the fall 2008 survey was not an exception. When asked whether they supported “environmental measures meant to restrict development in the critical areas,” only 11 percent opposed this idea, which taps both into pro-environmentalism as well as fears of excessive growth. Most of those who favored impact fees (67 percent) also supported this measure; only 28 percent of those favoring impact fees opposed more restrictions on development.

State Issues

Lowering the Drinking Age

There was not much support for lowering the drinking age in Maryland, with only 29 percent expressing support. Unsurprisingly, the greatest support for lower the drinking age came from those between 18 and 30, 52 percent approving this change.

Wind Turbines

The survey included a question which touched on the issue of the placement of wind turbines. Since there has been some resistance among local populations whose views might be marred by such turbines off coasts, or in state parks, the question read:

“Do you think that the STATE government should make it easier to install wind turbines to generate energy, even in scenic places like across the river from Annapolis where the old radio antennas are located or in state parks in Western Maryland?”

A clear majority supported this measure (80 percent). Respondents in areas closest to Annapolis (zip codes 21401 and 21403) were more likely than the average to support this proposal (81 and 89 percent).

“This proposal taps into the attitudes of those who favor measures meant to help the environment, increase energy independence and possibly lower energy costs. The strong level of support suggests that even visual discomforts entailed with the erection of such turbines are trumped by the likely benefits,” Nataf said.

Slots Referendum

The spring CSLI survey asked respondents about their feelings about introducing slots to Maryland; the fall survey used the same phrasing:

Maryland’s legislature agreed to put a referendum on the November ballot which would legalize slot machines at five locations, including one within Anne Arundel County in Laurel. At this time, would you be likely to vote in favor or against this referendum?

The fall results diverged somewhat from the spring results. The percentage supporting the slots proposal in spring was 63 percent; in fall, the percentage had dropped to 52 (see Table 8).

Table 8: Support for Slots Referendum

Slots	Spring 2008	Fall 2008
Favor	63	52
Disfavor	34	43
No answer/unsure	3	5
Total	100	100

“As the slots issue has increased in visibility, it’s likely that residents and voters in general have given the topic more thought, perhaps more fully assessing both pros and cons,” Nataf remarked.

When respondents were asked whether their minds “were firmly made up about this issue, or are [you] still thinking about it” most claimed to have made their minds up (78 percent). There was an equal propensity for advocates and detractors to have their minds firmly made up (80 percent in both cases). “There appears to be an equal likelihood that either side will convince wavering voters to finally join them – making the overall percentages unlikely to change,” Nataf added.

When asked about the “key reason” for supporting or opposing the slots referendum, the pro side emphasized the beneficial fiscal impact for the state of Maryland (51 percent), or the positive impact on education spending (23 percent). The con side emphasized that the money collected would be misused – spent on the operators or otherwise poorly spent – (26 percent), that gambling addiction or other gambling issues would arise (18 percent), crime/corruption (11 percent) and that gambling was bad or immoral (19 percent).

Asked whether the slots issue was “important to you,” the sample was split (48 percent saying yes, 52 percent saying no). Nearly one-third (32 percent) had received some mailed campaign materials or viewed an advertisement about the slots issue. A larger percentage of those favoring slots had received such materials (39 percent vs. 27 percent), implying that such campaign material may have been more effective in persuading the voters to support this measure.

National Issues

President Bush – Job Approval

The survey asked about President Bush’s job approval. Since fall 2006, CSLI polls have closely tracked national trends as indicated by the Gallup poll. At the time of the spring 2007 poll, Gallup put President Bush’s job approval at 33 percent; CSLI’s survey had him at 34 percent. Last spring, the CSLI survey found that 28 percent of the public approved of President Bush’s performance while a USAToday/Gallup poll gave a value of 30 percent.

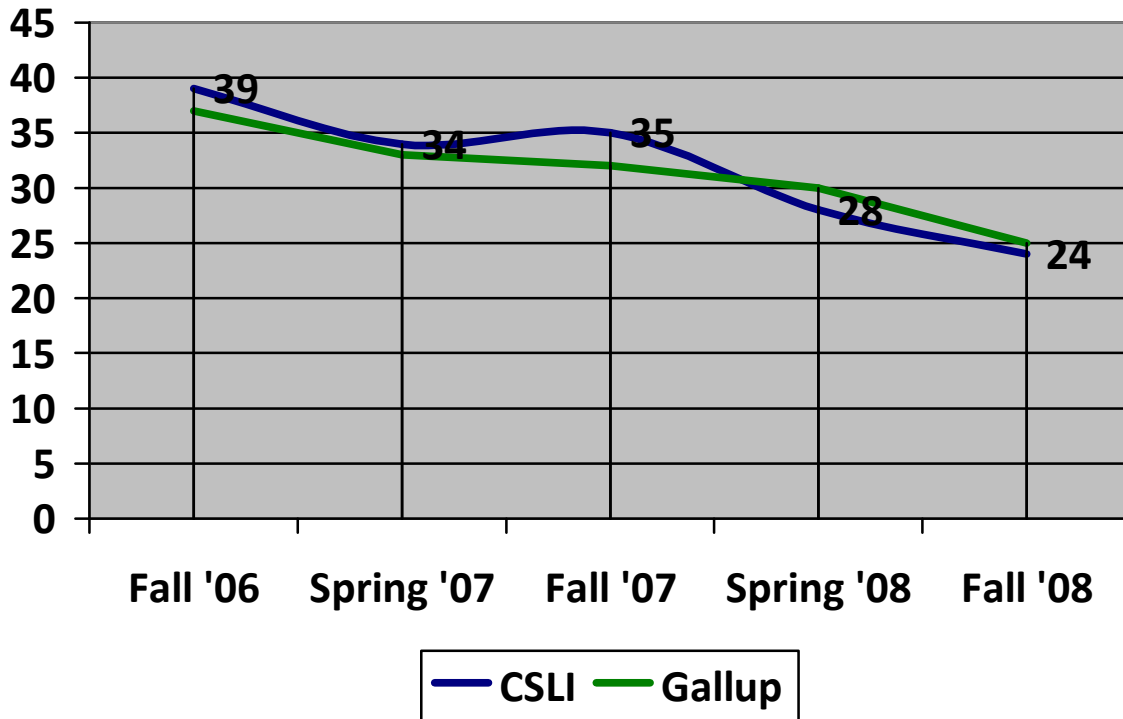
This fall, the CSLI survey showed that only 24 percent had a favorable view of President Bush’s performance; recent Gallup polls in October have registered a 25 percent favorable figure. (See Table 9 and Graph 4).

“Anne Arundel County’s population has expressed a similar perception of the president’s performance as has the rest of the nation, despite having a much stronger local economy, much of it dependent on military spending,” Nataf said.

Table 9: President Bush's Job Approval

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

**Graph 3: President George W. Bush's Job Approval –
CSLI and Selected Gallup 2006-2008**



As seen on Table 10, Bush's popularity among both Democrats and Republicans dropped, especially among the latter. Indeed, a plurality of Republicans disapproved of Bush, highlighting the impact of problems the Bush administration has been facing recently. The only bright spot was a small rise in approval ratings among unaffiliated voters (from 19 to 24 percent).

**Table 10: President Bush's Fall 2007, Spring 2008 and Fall 2008
Job Approval by Party Registration**

Issue	Overall		Democrats			Republicans			Unaffiliated			
	Fall	Spring	Fall	Fall	Spring	Fall	Fall	Spring	Fall	Fall	Spring	Fall
Approve	35	28	24	18	9	6	56	57	43	26	19	24
Disapprove	57	62	69	79	87	88	35	31	48	62	74	73
No opinion	9	10	8	4	5	6	9	11	9	12	7	3
Total	101	100	101	101	101	100	100	99	100	100	100	100

“The economic situation in the country has completely overwhelmed the public’s perception of all other national issues. Although the situation in Iraq has improved, the president hasn’t gained any traction given the continuing crisis of confidence about the economy,” Nataf said.

Table 11 shows the relationship between Bush’s job approval and perceptions of economic conditions in the country. There was a strong relationship – those perceiving the economy to be in less than “good” were much more likely to disapprove of Bush’s job performance. “The president’s approval suffers due to the fact that 59 percent of the public feels that the economy is in ‘poor’ shape – and only 18 percent of those folks approve of the job Bush is doing.”

Table 11: President Bush’s Job Approval and Perceptions of National Economic Conditions

Issue	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Approve	75	58	33	18
Disapprove	25	38	60	74
No answer	0	4	7	8
Total	100	100	100	100

Voters’ Presidential Preferences for 2008

The final aspect of the spring survey concerned presidential voting preferences. Based on the weighted sample, John McCain and Barack Obama are essentially tied among those registered voters expressing an answer.

Table 12: Party Registration and Presidential Candidate Preference (in percent)

Candidate	Overall	Democrats	Republicans	Unaffiliated
Barack Obama	40	75	12	32
John McCain	41	13	72	31
Other ticket	4	3	2	10
Undecided	10	6	10	20
No answer	5	3	4	8
Total	100	100	100	101

Note: Totals do not equal 100 percent due to rounding and support for some other candidates.

The relatively tepid support of Republicans for the McCain/Palin ticket was shown by the smaller percentage supporting their party’s candidate (72 percentage) compared to the percentage of Democrats supporting the Obama/Biden ticket (75 percent). A higher percentage of Republicans were also undecided – should they decide to support the ticket by voting, McCain’s overall percentage may increase. Unaffiliated voters were evenly divided, with a substantial number still undecided or thinking about some other ticket. Clearly, as this group either firms up its choices or opts out of voting altogether, either ticket could experience some meaningful changes in support on Nov. 4.

Table 13: Party, Presidential Candidate Preference and Presidential Approval (in percent)

Candidate	Overall		Democrats		Republicans		Unaffiliated	
	Approve	Not	Approve	Not	Approve	Not	Approve	Not
Barack Obama	6	57	23	83	7	20	0	45
John McCain	80	26	77	7	84	64	61	24
Other ticket	3	5	0	3	0	4	11	10
Undecided	6	10	0	5	6	9	22	16
No answer	4	4	0	2	3	3	6	6
Total	99	102	100	100	100	100	100	101

Finally, Table 13 shows the strong relationship between Bush’s job approval and support for the Republican ticket. Those approving of the president’s job were overwhelming favorable to McCain: 80 percent overall, and 84 percent of Republicans. Even 77 percent of Democrats who were favorable to Bush were inclined to vote for McCain. An additional 61 percent of unaffiliated voters who approved of Bush were likely to support the Republican ticket. Clearly, McCain’s problem was the small percentage of voters favorably predisposed to Bush.

“These results show that the vote is largely retrospective: perceptions of Bush color perceptions of the choices facing the public. McCain is running into the headwind of Bush antipathy which undermines even his support among Republicans – to say nothing of Democrats and unaffiliated voters. This surely accounts for the competitive nature of the race here in Anne Arundel County, which has not supported a Democratic ticket since 1964,” Nataf said.

Issues and Candidate Choices

Respondents were asked about the issues which shaped their choice of presidential ticket. First, they were asked about the options listed on Table 14. There was a relatively broad consensus on “right character,” (81 percent saying very important) “vision,” (72 percent) “domestic issues,” (79 percent) and “foreign policy” (78 percent). The respondents’ “dislike of the candidate’s opponent” was less frequently chosen (20 percent) as was the “candidate’s choice for vice president” (51 percent).

Table 14: Importance of Various Items Affecting Presidential Vote

Item	Very important	Somewhat important	Not very important	No opinion
Candidate has the right character for the job	81	15	3	2
Candidate shares my vision for the country	72	22	4	2
Candidate’s position on domestic issues	79	18	1	3
Candidate’s position on foreign policy issues	78	17	2	2
Your dislike of the candidate’s opponent	20	20	54	6
Candidate’s choice for vice president	51	31	16	3

There were only small differences among the two tickets for these items, except for the item dealing with the choice for vice president. Only 43 percent of those choosing the McCain/Palin ticket said the vice presidential choice was “very important” compared to 66 percent choosing

the Obama/Biden ticket. “These results imply that those choosing the Republican ticket were less affected by the inclusion of Sarah Palin as the vice presidential running mate. It is possible that the Democrats got a bigger bounce out of the choice of Joe Biden,” Nataf said.

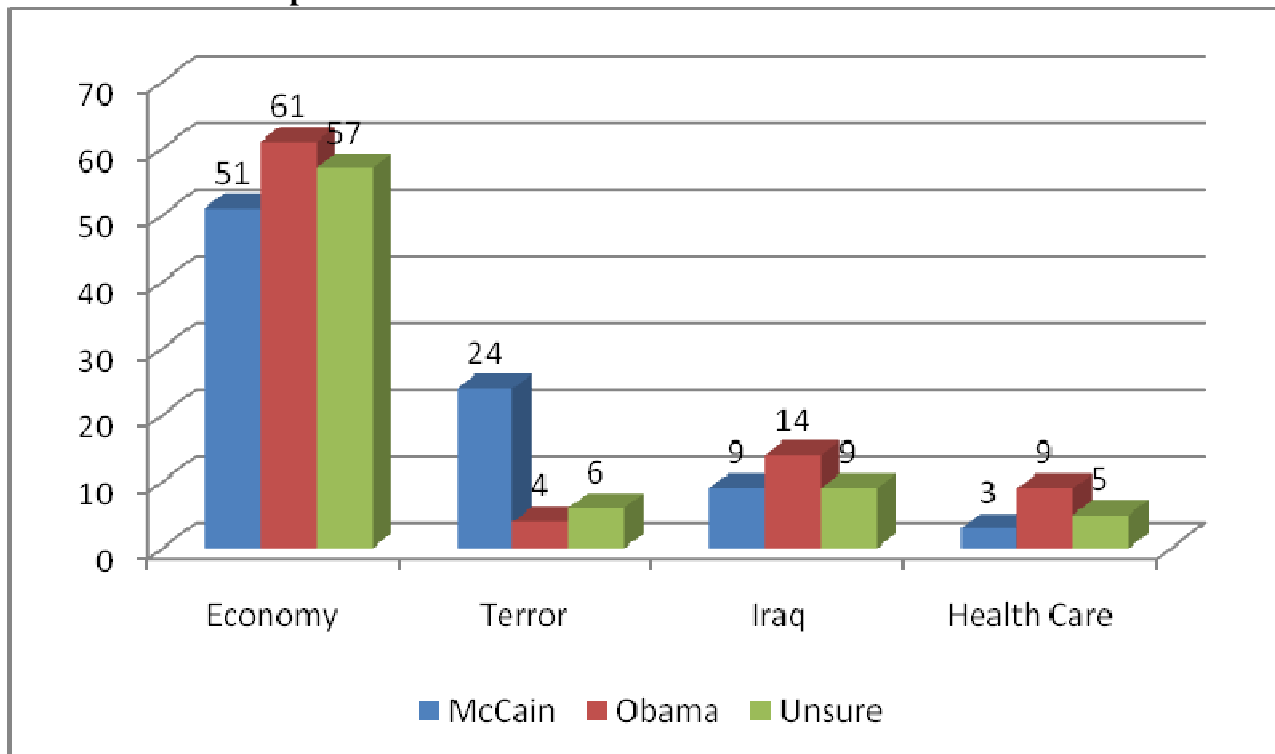
Second, respondents were asked to choose one issue most important to their vote for president from the set of policy concerns included in many of the exit polls during the primaries: economy, Iraq, terrorism and health care. The overwhelming choice was the economy (56 percent), with terrorism (13 percent), Iraq (10 percent) and health care (7 percent) clear runners-up.

As depicted on Table 15 and Graph 4, there was a bit more preoccupation among Obama supporters for both the economy and Iraq. McCain supporters were much more inclined to express concern with terrorism and much less concern with health care. “The differences on Iraq and terrorism go back at least to the Kerry-Bush contest in 2004,” Nataf observed. “The greater concerns with health care and the economy are less systematic but not unusual for Democratic party supporters, who typically are more likely to be negatively impacted by labor market conditions.”

Table 15: Various Issues and Presidential Vote Preference

Item	McCain	Obama	Unsure
Economy	51	61	57
Terror	24	4	6
Iraq	9	14	9
Health Care	3	9	5

Graph 4: Various Issues and Presidential Vote Preference



Methodology

The survey polled a random sample of 579 county residents who were at least 18 years old. It was conducted October 20-23 2008 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; slots and presidential voting results were weighted by both gender and party registration. College students were trained and used as telephone interviewers.

For information about this survey or CSLI, call Dan Nataf at 410-777-2733 (e-mail: ddnataf@aacc.edu) or visit the CSLI Web site at www.aacc.edu/csl, where this press release is posted under “Recent Surveys.” CSLI is part of the Sarbanes Center for Public and Community Service at Anne Arundel Community College.

CSLI Semiannual Survey – Fall 2008

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	9
Traffic congestion/transportation problems	6
Education, problems with schools	10
Taxes – too high	12
Inefficient government, wasteful spending	1
Corruption in government/politicians are bad	1
Environment (e.g., air or water pollution, saving the Bay)	4
Economy – (e.g., no jobs, high cost of living, business closing or losses)	36
Lack of affordable housing	3
Other answer (write in:	6
Unsure/No Answer	7

Note: Economy and “lack of affordable housing” were combined as reported on Table 1. As the actual percentages were 35.6 and 2.5 percent, this was rounded to 38 percent on that table. Crime combined “crime” with “drugs” whose actual percentages were 3.7 and 1.5 percent, which was rounded to 5 on Table 1.

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

- (1) **Right** direction 52%
- (2) **Wrong** direction 31%
- (0) **Unsure** or don't know 17%

3. Thinking about our County's economy, how would you rate economic conditions in Anne Arundel County today -- excellent, good, only fair, or poor?

- (1) Excellent 6%
- (2) Good 43%
- (3) Only Fair 37%
- (4) Poor 12%
- (0) Don't Know, No Answer 2%

4. How would you rate economic conditions in our COUNTRY today?

- (1) Excellent 1%
- (2) Good 4%
- (3) Only Fair 36%
- (4) Poor 59%
- (0) Don't Know, No Answer 1%

5 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
5.1 Wages or salaries are not rising as fast as the cost of living	59	39	2
5.2 Facing the possibility of unemployment	15	84	1
5.3 Significant losses in your stock or retirement accounts	71	27	2
5.4 Facing the possibility of house foreclosure or loss	4	95	1
5.5 Unable to find affordable housing	11	88	1
5.6 Hard to afford cost of transportation	32	67	1
5.7 Hard to afford cost of utilities such as electricity or gas	50	49	1
5.8 Health care insurance is unavailable, too expensive or inadequate	30	69	1
5.9 Taxes are too high relative to what is received from government services such as education, roads and safety.	58	37	4

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

- (1) Very confident 5%
- (2) Somewhat confident 40%
- (3) Not very confident 53%
- (4) Unsure 3%
- (0) No answer 0%

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

	Support	Oppose	Unsure	No answer
7.1 A \$500 ambulance fee to help pay for county services?	26	67	6	1
7.2 Creating or increasing fees to sports leagues that use public parks to cover the maintenance of those parks?	50	45	4	1
7.3 Increasing impact fees on new construction in our county?	63	31	5	1
7.4 Increasing the tax on hotel stays from 7 percent to 10 percent	33	59	6	1
7.5 Efforts by police to identify illegal immigrants and refer them to federal immigration services?	70	25	4	1
7.6 Environmental measures meant to restrict development in critical areas?	84	11	3	1
7.7 Decreasing the drinking age to 18	29	68	2	1

8. Do you think that the STATE government should make it easier to install wind turbines to generate energy, even in scenic places like across the river from Annapolis where the old radar antennas are located or in state parks in Western Maryland?

(1) Yes 80% (2) No 15% (0) No answer 5%

9. Maryland’s legislature agreed to put a referendum on the November ballot which would legalize slot machines at five locations, including one within Anne Arundel County in Laurel. At this time, would you be likely to vote in favor or against this referendum?

(1) Favor 52% (2) Against 43% (3) Unsure 5

10. Is your mind firmly made up about this issue, or are you still thinking about it?

(1) Firm 78% (2) Still thinking about it 20% (0) No answer 2%

11. Whatever your stance about this referendum, please answer the following three questions:

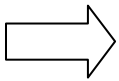
11.1 Is the slots issue a particularly important one to you?

(1) Yes 48%
 (2) No 52%
 (0) No answer 0%

11.2 What is the key reason that you might support or oppose the slots referendum?

See values in text

11.3 Have you received any pro or anti-slots material in the mail, or viewed any advertisements about it? (1) Yes 32% (2) No 67% (0) No answer 1%



12. Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling his job as president?

(1) Approve 24% (2) Disapprove 69% (0) Don't know, unsure 8%

13. With which political party, if any, are you registered? (weights only applied to Democrats, Republicans and Unaffiliated registered voters)

(1) Democratic 42% weighted 46% unweighted	(4) None 3%
(2) Republican 43% weighted 38% unweighted	(5) Other (e.g., Green Party) 1%
(3) Independent or undeclared 15% weighted 16% unweighted	(0) No Answer 3%

14. Did you vote in the March primary elections?

(1) Yes 69% (2) No 31% (0) Not sure, don't know 0%

15. How likely are you to vote in the November elections, very likely, somewhat likely or not very likely?

(1) Very likely 92%
 (2) Somewhat likely 2%
 (3) Not very likely 4%
 (0) Unsure/don't know 1%

16. Did you watch any of the Presidential debates?

(1) Yes (*GOTO #16.1*) 88%
 (2) No (*skip to #17 next page*) 12%
 (0) No answer (*skip to #17 next page*) 0%

IF YES to 16 → 16.1 How much influence did the debates have on your choice of Presidential candidate: no influence, some influence or a great influence?

(1) No influence 52%
 (2) Some influence 37%
 (3) Great influence 10% (0) No answer 1%

17. If the 2008 Presidential election were being held today, would you vote for the Republican ticket of John McCain and Sarah Palin, or the Democratic ticket of Barack Obama and Joe Biden, or some other ticket?

- (1) McCain/Palin 41% (2) Obama/Biden 40% (3) Other ticket 4%
 (5) Unsure at this time 10% (0) No answer/wouldn't vote 5%

18. Thinking about the reasons for your choice for President, please say whether the following items are very important, somewhat important or not very important in shaping your vote:

Item	Very important	Somewhat important	Not very important	No opinion
18.1 Candidate has the right character for the job	81	15	3	2
18.2 Candidate shares my vision for the country	72	22	4	2
18.3 Candidate's position on domestic issues	79	18	1	3
18.4 Candidate's position on foreign policy issues	78	17	2	2
18.5 Your dislike of the candidate's opponent	20	20	54	6
18.6 Candidate's choice for vice president	51	31	16	3

19. If you had to choose, which ONE of the following issues is most important to your vote for president this year - the economy, terrorism, the situation in Iraq, healthcare or would it be some other issue?

Economy	Terrorism	Iraq	Healthcare	Other issue (write in issue)	No opinion
56%	13%	10%	7%	6% (All of the above: 7%)	2%

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

20. Overall, which of the following best describes your political beliefs: liberal, moderate or conservative?

- (1) Liberal 15% (2) Moderate 52% (3) Conservative 30% (0) Other, No Answer 4%

21. What is your age?

Age Range	Percentage
18-30	8
31-40	12
41-50	26
51-60	23
61-65	10
66+	21
Total	100

22. 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 0%	(5) Completed college with a bachelor's degree 22%
(2) a high school diploma 12%	(6) post graduate work 26%
(3) some college but less than a 2 year degree 24%	(7) Other vocational or technical training 1%
(4) Completed at least a 2 year associate college degree but without a bachelor's degree 14%	(0) No Answer 1%

23. 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 5%
- (2) \$30,000 to \$50,000 12%
- (3) \$50,001 to \$75,000 17%
- (4) \$75,001-\$100,000 17%
- (5) \$100,001-\$150,000 22%
- (6) Over \$150,000 15%
- (0) No Answer 13%

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

Employed full time for a company in the private sector or self employed	33
Employed full or part time in a private non-profit organization	6
Employed full time for government in a non-defense related activity such as education, public works or public safety	15
Employed full time for government in a defense related activity	6
Employed part time	6
Retired	28
Student	1
Unemployed and seeking a job	1
Unemployed and not seeking a job	3
No answer	1

25. Regarding race, how would you describe yourself?

- (1) African American 6%
- (2) Asian 1%
- (3) Caucasian 84%
- (4) Latino/Hispanic 2%
- (5) Other or mixed racial background 5%
- (0) No Answer 3%

26. Regarding Religion, how would you describe yourself?

(1) None	7%	(2) Non-practicing	10%
(3) Evangelical or born again Christian (possibly Baptist, Pentecostal)	9%	(4) Catholic	30%
(5) Jewish	2%	(6) Protestant (possibly Lutherans, Methodists, Presbyterian, Anglican, Episcopalian)	23%
(7) Some other Christian	8%	(8) A 'spiritual person' not associated with an organized religion	3%
(9) Other	4%	(0) No Answer	4%

27. What is your current marital status?

- (1) Single 11%
- (2) Married 73%
- (3) Separated/divorced 8%
- (4) Widowed 6%
- (5) Other 1%
- (0) No answer 2%

28. 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 31% (2) No 69%

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

SAY: That concludes our survey, thanks for participating.

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

29. Gender of respondent to whom you were speaking:

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

30. Zip code _____

Zip code	Percent
20711	1.3
20714	.1
20724	1.2
20733	.8
20751	.8
20755	.9
20764	1.3
20765	.1
20776	.9
20778	.3
21012	5.9
21032	1.9
21035	1.0
21037	3.2
21054	1.8
21056	.1
21060	5.4
21061	6.5
21062	.1
21076	1.4
21090	1.3
21108	3.3
21113	5.2
21114	4.8
21122	12.5
21140	1.2
21144	6.1
21146	8.3
21220	.1
21226	.1
21401	11.7
21403	5.9
21405	.3
21406	.3
21409	3.9
Total	100.0