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Center for the Study of Local Issues
Anne Arundel Community College

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Survey Finds Local High Voter Interest in Presidential Elections

According to a survey conducted October 11-14 by the Center for the Study of Local Issues (CSLI) at Anne Arundel Community College, county residents are paying a lot of attention to the campaigns in anticipation of November elections. When asked whether they planned to vote in the coming elections, 90 percent said they were “very likely.” Another 85 percent claimed to have watched at least one Presidential debate. A plurality said that they planned to vote for George W. Bush (47%) as opposed to John Kerry (36%), but another 8 percent still had not made up their minds.

Summary of Other Findings

This press release examines the Presidential vote in greater detail, reviewing the interplay of ideology, debates, undecided voters, job approval, gender, religion, candidate characteristics and issues upon the choice for either ticket.

Other issues discussed in this press release are summarized below:

- **Most important problem:** Transportation rose and education fell as the County’s most important problems.
- **Right direction/wrong direction:** There was little change in the “right direction/wrong direction” question applied to the County, with 58 percent continuing to think that the County is going in the right direction.
- **Tax/revenue cap:** There continued to be a fall in the percentage thinking that the cap had “hurt the ability of the County to provide services to its citizens,” declining from 38 to 29 percent. This reflected growing optimism about the local economy as the percentage saying that the economy was “excellent” or “good” rose from 62 to 74 percent.
- **Anticipating the future, the public’s view of life in 2010:** Despite optimism about the overall quality of life in the County in 2010, the sample was relatively pessimistic that important issues involving education, health care, growth, crime and the environment would be improved over the next six years.

- **Underage drinking:** A plurality (41 percent) of the respondents thought that underage drinking was a very serious problem. Large majorities thought that drinking and driving, sale or access to alcohol by minors and even safety at special events such as high school sports were concerns.
- **Zoning and subdivision legislation:** Only 23 percent were aware that the County Council was revising the zoning and subdivision code. A majority favored making it “easier for homeowners to create a small apartment within their houses” (52 percent) while a plurality favored making it “easier for bed and breakfast facilities to be placed in residential areas (44 percent). Only six percent said that County growth and planning policies were “very effective.”
- **Chesapeake Bay:** A plurality of respondents favored spending \$50 on improving sewage treatment plants (46 percent) rather than controlling agricultural run-off (23 percent) or purchasing land in environmentally sensitive areas (16 percent).
- **Voting machines and paper records:** A plurality (49 percent) favored having a paper record of votes to enable manual recounts in a disputed election.
- **Terrorism:** The percentage thinking that a terrorist attack within the County over the next year continued to decline, dropping from 9 to 7 percent over a year. There was a small increase in the percentage saying that local authorities are “not very prepared” to deal with a terrorist attack, rising from 18 to 27 percent.
- **Methodology:** The survey polled a random sample of 303 county residents who were at least 18 years old and living in their primary residence. The margin of sampling error was approximately six percent.

The Presidential Vote – Detailed Findings

Why does the County Lean Republican on Presidential Votes, but Leans Democratic in Party Registration?

CSLI director Dan Nataf said “A majority of Anne Arundel County voters rarely chooses Democratic Presidential candidates, even though Democrats outnumber Republicans by over five percent points in the County.” The largest recent margin between Republican and Democratic candidates was in 1988: 28 percent. Since 1992, the difference has been closer to 7 percent. “The race here may tighten up depending on the choices of currently undecided voters and ultimately, differences between polling numbers and actual turnout.”

Nataf speculated that the current gap in support between Republican and Democratic tickets was due to a large number of conservative Democrats. “Only a tiny percentage of liberal or moderate Democratic voters are planning to vote for Bush, but one half of conservative Democrats claimed they would be voting for the President.” Conservative Democrats make up about one-quarter of the Democratic electorate. “Given that Democrats constitute 44 percent of the electorate, defections among conservative Democrats add about 5 or 6 points to the Republican candidate’s overall county total. Combined with defections among moderate Democrats, that amounts to a net gain of 8 percentage points for Bush.” Democrats were also twice as likely as Republicans to be “unsure” about for whom to vote, resulting in another boost for the Bush vote total in the county (see Table 2).

Nataf said that “Republican defections are much less likely, given that there are very few liberals among them.” (See Table 1). Due to these ideological trends, “the overall expected Republican defection rate is about one half that of Democrats.”

Table 1: Party and Ideology¹

Party/Ideology	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative	Unsure/No answer	Total
Democrat	26	48	23	2	99
Republican	2	46	51	2	101
Independent	10	60	17	13	100

As seen on Table 1, independents are ideologically neither as liberal as Democrats nor as conservative as Republicans. Rather, they tend to cluster in the “moderate” category, and show a larger percentage unable or unwilling to identify themselves in ideological terms. Politically, Table 2 shows that independents appear to be leaning towards the Republican ticket, although the small sample size among independents precludes any firm conclusions.

Table 2: Party and Presidential Vote

Party/Ideology	Bush/Chaney	Kerry/Edwards	Undecided	Unsure/No answer	Total
Democrat	18	70	3	10	101
Republican	84	9	2	5	100
Independent	42	39	7	12	100

Presidential Debates

Residents who watched any of the Presidential debates were more likely to vote for Kerry (41 percent) than those who did not (23 percent). The ideological group that was most moved by the debates were “moderates” 51 percent of whom said that the debates had “some” or “great” influence on their choice of candidate, compared to 35 percent of liberals and only 25 percent of conservatives. The net impact of the debates on “moderates” was to nudge them to the Kerry/Edwards ticket, as 47 percent of moderates saying that the debates had some or great influence were inclined to support the Democrats, while only 37 percent supported the Bush/Cheney ticket.

“These findings suggest that the Democratic ticket was the prime beneficiary of the debates in Anne Arundel County, paralleling what polls have shown nationally,” said Nataf.

The Undecided Voters and Presidential Approval

Overall, 47 percent approved of the job being done by the President, while 42 percent disapproved and another 9 percent were unsure (2 percent gave no answer).

¹ All values in tables are percentages unless otherwise noted. Third party candidates are not mentioned in this analysis due to very small percentage of voters saying that they were likely to vote for candidates other than those representing the Democratic and Republican tickets. For details, see the attached questionnaire.

About 8 percent of the sample claimed to be unsure about their choice for President. While overwhelming majorities of those preferring either side expressed predictable views regarding President Bush’s job approval, with supporters approving and opponents disapproving, unsure respondents appeared to have less predictable views in this regard. The findings show that those residents still uncertain about their preferred ticket tended to be less favorable towards President Bush, with 47 percent saying “unfavorable” compared to only 37 percent saying “favorable.” Nataf commented that “these results show that those who remain uncertain are likely to be unenthusiastic about the incumbent, but may remain unsold on the challenger. They may break against the President, or simply stay home and not vote at all.”

Gender Gap, Marital Status

The Anne Arundel sample also showed a “gender gap” similar to that found in national polling. While women were nearly evenly split between the Republican and Democratic tickets (45 percent and 42 percent respectively), men were nearly twice as likely to vote for the Republican ticket (59 percent to 31 percent). While about one-half (49 percent) of all women were Democrats, this was true of only 39 percent of men. About 29 percent of women were conservatives, compared to 39 percent of men. “Party results depend strongly on which groups are most effectively mobilized to turnout on election day; if women vote in disproportionately high numbers, Democrats improve their scores. If men come out in larger numbers, the tide turns towards the Republicans,” said Nataf.

Also statistically significant were the differences between married and single individuals. The latter split their vote (41 percent voting for each side, but 18 percent still unsure) while the former favored Bush 54 to 39 with only 8 percent undecided.

Religion and the Choice of Candidate²

Another statistically significant relationship was found between respondents’ answer to the question concerning religion and the choice of Presidential candidate. As shown on Table 2a, those who claimed to be non-practicing, agnostic or atheist were more likely to be Kerry supporters by a 2 to 1 ratio. By contrast, other numerically significant religious groupings (Protestants, Catholics and “others” usually other Christian denominations) opposed Kerry in some cases by a nearly equal ratio.

Table 2a: Religion and Presidential Vote

Religion/Candidate	Bush	Kerry	Unsure	Total
Non-practicing, agnostic, atheist	32	63	5	100
Protestant	57	34	8	100
Catholic	54	38	9	101
Other	61	28	11	100

² While our findings showed that nearly three-quarters (73 percent) of African-Americans were more likely to support the Kerry/Edwards ticket, the relationship was not statistically significant, probably due to the small percentage of African-American respondents in the sample.

Candidate Characteristics and Issues

When asked about motives behind their intended voting choices, there were no statistically significant differences between those supporting either ticket regarding “candidate’s leadership ability or vision” and “candidate’s position on domestic issues.”

However, when asked about “dislike of your candidate’s opponent,” 38 percent of Kerry supporters cited this factor as being “very important” compared to only 24 percent of Bush’s backers. “This tendency has probably been present since the inception of the campaign: much of the sentiment favoring Kerry is really hostility towards the President,” Nataf suggested.

On issues, clear differences were found among voters supporting each ticket. As shown in Table 3, the Bush campaign’s focus on the “war on terrorism” found resonance among backers of the Republican ticket, with 44 percent saying that terrorism was the most important issue. Also implicit in the pattern found among Bush supporters was a sense in which the war in Iraq was not especially distinguishable from the general challenge against terrorism given the relatively low incidence of those specifying Iraq compared to terrorism.

By contrast, the war on terrorism was the least cited concern among Kerry supporters. For them, the main focus was the war in Iraq, cited by a plurality of 33 percent. This finding echoes the Kerry campaign’s argument that the war in Iraq was a diversion from the war on terrorism. Other than Iraq, Kerry supporters were much more likely to cite domestic issues such as the economy or healthcare as central concerns than were Bush supporters.

Table 3: Presidential Vote and Most Important Issue

Party/Ideology	Economy	Terrorism	Iraq	Healthcare	Other	No opinion	Total
Bush/Cheney	13	44	18	8	16	1	100
Kerry/Edwards	24	10	33	20	14	0	101
Overall	20	26	23	15	15	1	100

Note: Most of those saying “Other” stressed some combination of the issues mentioned

The impact of the foreign policy debate about terrorism and Iraq found resonance in one other survey finding. One question asked respondents, “Do you have a friend or family member who is currently serving in the military in Iraq or Afghanistan?” Over one-third of the sample (35 percent) responded affirmatively. Among those, there was a small advantage towards the Bush ticket, with 54 percent intending to vote for the Republican ticket compared to only 46 percent among those who did not have a friend or family in Iraq or Afghanistan. Among the latter, 23 percent saw both terrorism and Iraq as their most important concern, while among those who did know someone stationed in Iraq or Afghanistan, 33 percent saw terrorism as the primary concern, but only 21 percent chose Iraq. “This suggests that those who have friends or family stationed abroad are more likely to see those serving abroad as broadly participating in the war on terrorism rather than simply in Iraq,” Nataf said.

Other Topics Covered in Survey

The rest of the survey focused attention on the most important issue facing residents, benchmark questions on the revenue/tax cap and the economy, residents perceptions of how problems will fare in 2010, underage drinking, legislation facing the County Council dealing with planning and zoning, where residents would like to see resources spent to curb pollution in the Chesapeake Bay, and whether a paper record should accompany electronic voting. These are outlined in detail below.

Most Important Problem – Transportation Rises as Concern

Each CSLI survey starts by asking the public an open-ended question: “What is the most important problem facing the residents of Anne Arundel county at the present time.” Typically, crime, education, growth, transportation and taxes are the top items cited, as was the case this time (see Table 3 and Graph 1).

Compared with last spring, there was a drop in concern about taxes (from 13 to 10 percent) and the state of the economy (from 12 percent to 8 percent. There was a strong rise in the percent concerned with transportation (up from 10 percent to 17 percent), and an even larger drop in the percentage concerned with education (down from 22 to 12 percent).

Nataf suggested that perhaps “the rise in concern over transportation was due to problems residents might be experiencing related to the repaving of the Bay Bridge.”

Table 3: Percentage Citing Item as County’s “Most Important Problem” in 2003-04

Problem	Spring '03	Fall '03	Spring '04	Fall '04
Traffic congestion/problems	9	11	10	17
Growth/overpopulation- too much development	12	15	8	14
Education, problems with schools	17	17	22	12
Taxes – too high	9	14	13	10
Economy – (e.g., no jobs, high cost of living, business closing or losses)	14	8	12	8
Crime	4	5	4	6
Environment (e.g., air or water pollution, saving the Bay)	5	7	4	5
Drugs	3	1	4	3
Terrorism	2	0	1	1
Inefficient government, wasteful spending	2	1	2	1
Corruption in government/politicians are bad	0	1	2	1
Other answer	8	11	8	9
Unsure/No Answer	13	9	10	13
Total	98	100	100	100

Note: Table 2 and Graph 1 combine “growth” and “transportation” into “Growth” as well as “crime” and “drugs” into “Crime” for reporting and comparison purposes.

Graph 1: Most Important Issue - Trends

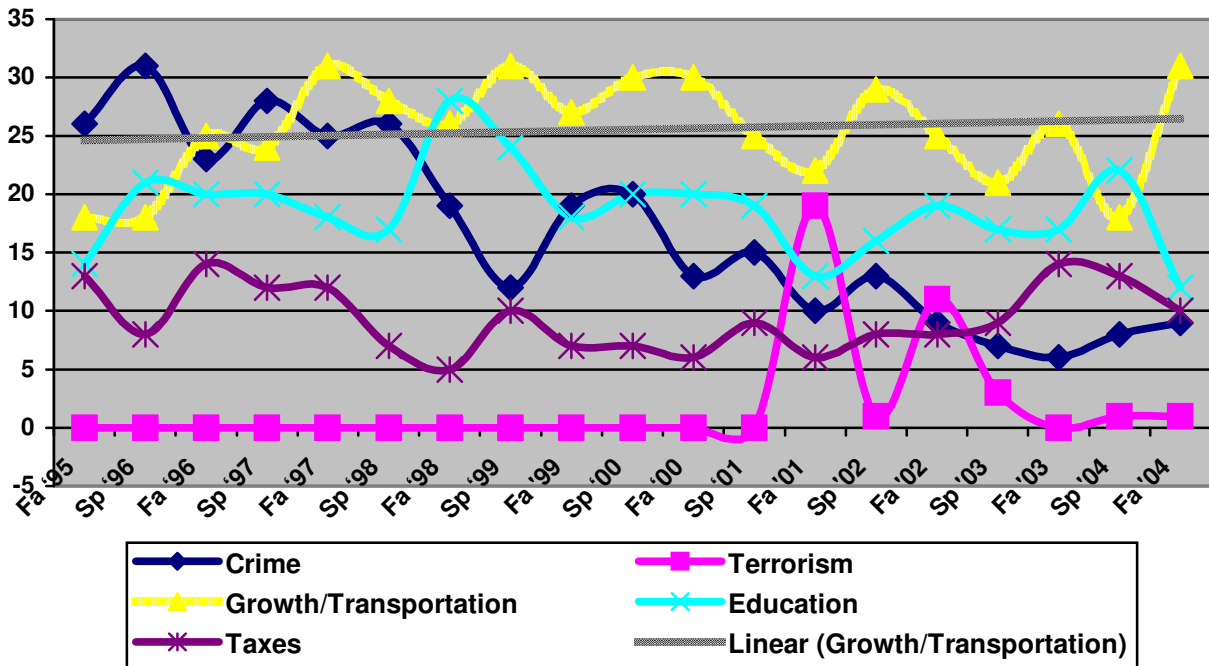


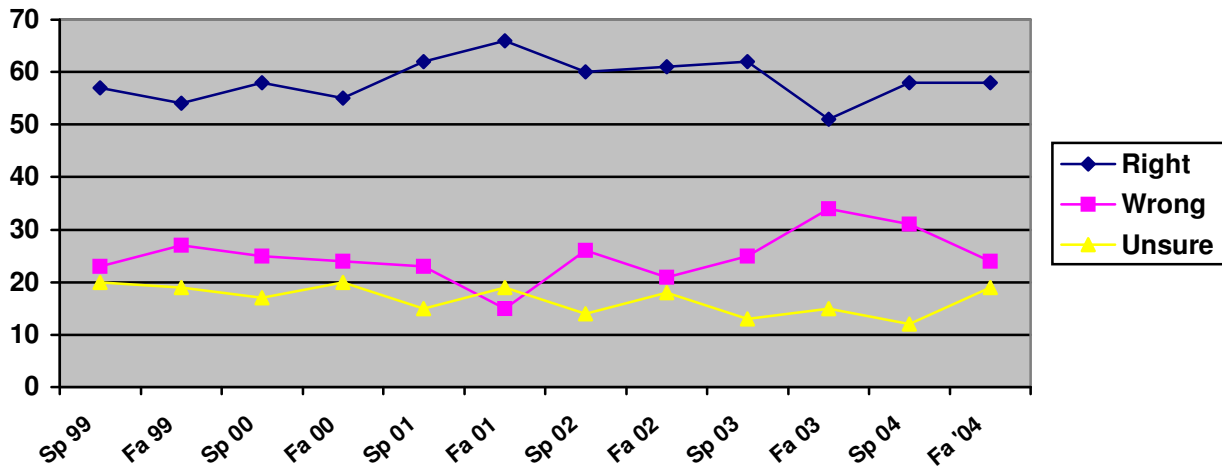
Table 4: “Most Important Problem facing Residents” Fall 1995 to Spring 2004

Problem	Fa '95	Sp '96	Fa '96	Sp '97	Fa '97	Sp '98	Fa '98	Sp '99	Fa '99	Sp '00	Fa '00	Sp '01	Fa '01	Sp '01	Fa '02	Sp '02	Fa '03	Sp '03	Fa '04
Crime	26	31	23	28	25	26	19	12	19	20	13	15	10	13	13	7	6	8	9
Terrorism	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	18	1	11	2	0	1	1
Growth/Transportation	18	18	25	24	31	28	26	31	27	30	30	25	22	28	25	21	26	18	31
Education	14	21	20	20	18	17	28	24	18	20	20	19	13	16	19	17	17	22	12
Taxes	13	8	14	12	12	7	5	10	7	7	6	9	6	8	8	9	14	13	10

County – Right or Wrong Direction?

The survey included a CSLI benchmark question: “Overall, would you say that the county is headed in the right direction or in the wrong direction?” Graph 2 shows that in the past, the results did not vary much, hovering around 60 percent. One year ago, the percentage saying ‘right direction’ had dropped to only 51 percent (34 percent saying “wrong direction” and 15 percent being unsure). In spring 2004, there was a rebound back to 58 percent; the fall 2004 results show no change from that mark, although there was a lowering of the “wrong” percentage from 31 to 24 percent. Nataf remarked, “The public’s optimism about the course of the county seems to have stabilized at roughly average levels, with a sizable group currently unsure whether the course is positive or negative.”

Graph 2: County - Right or Wrong Direction



Tax/Revenue Cap – Still Perceived as Having an Impact

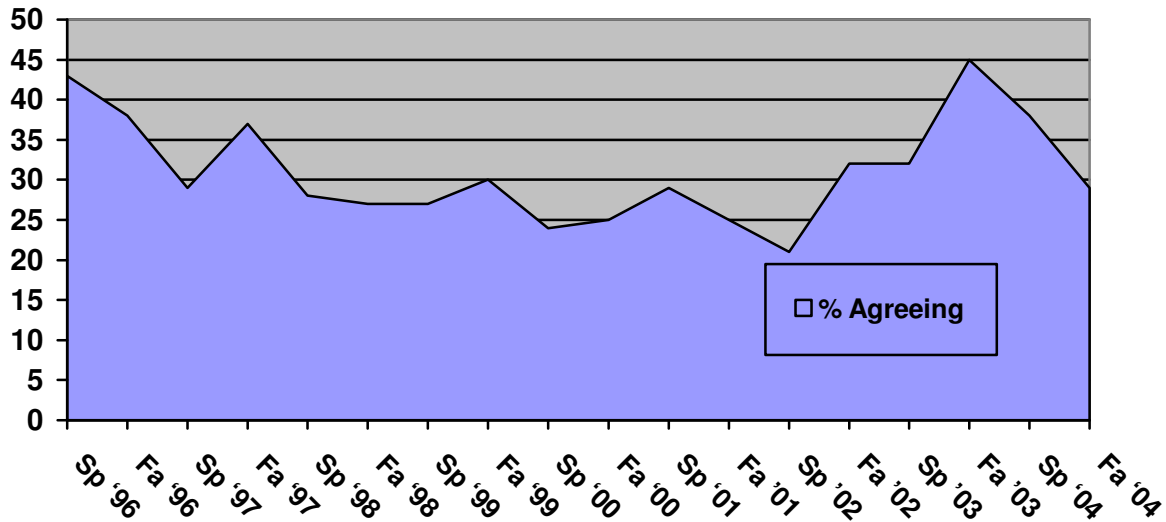
After reaching historical highs a year ago, the percentage of respondents agreeing that the tax/revenue cap has “hurt the ability of the county to provide services to its citizens” continued to drop. This year the percent agreeing declined to 29 percent, down from 38 percent last spring and 45 percent a year ago.³ (See Table 5 and Graph 3). Nataf pointed out that “although the percent agreeing that services were hurt dropped, the percentage saying that services have *not* been affected only rose by 2 percent (from 43 to 45 percent). The difference was in the percentage of undecided respondents, which rose 5 percent. This shows that the public is still concerned about the County’s ability to meet its obligations.”

Table 5: Percentage Agreeing that Revenue Cap has Hurt Ability of County to Provide Services: Spring 1996 to Fall 2004

Question/Survey	Sp '96	Fa '96	Sp '97	Fa '97	Sp '98	Fa '98	Sp '99	Fa '99	Sp '00	Fa '00	Sp '01	Fa '01	Sp '02	Fa '02	Sp '03	Fa '03	Sp '04	Fa '04
% Agreeing	43	38	29	37	28	27	27	30	24	25	29	25	21	32	32	45	38	29

³ In the fall 2004 poll, 56 percent said that the tax/revenue cap had *not* hurt the ability of the county to provide services, while another 15 percent had no opinion.

Graph 3: Percent Agreeing that Cap Hurts Services



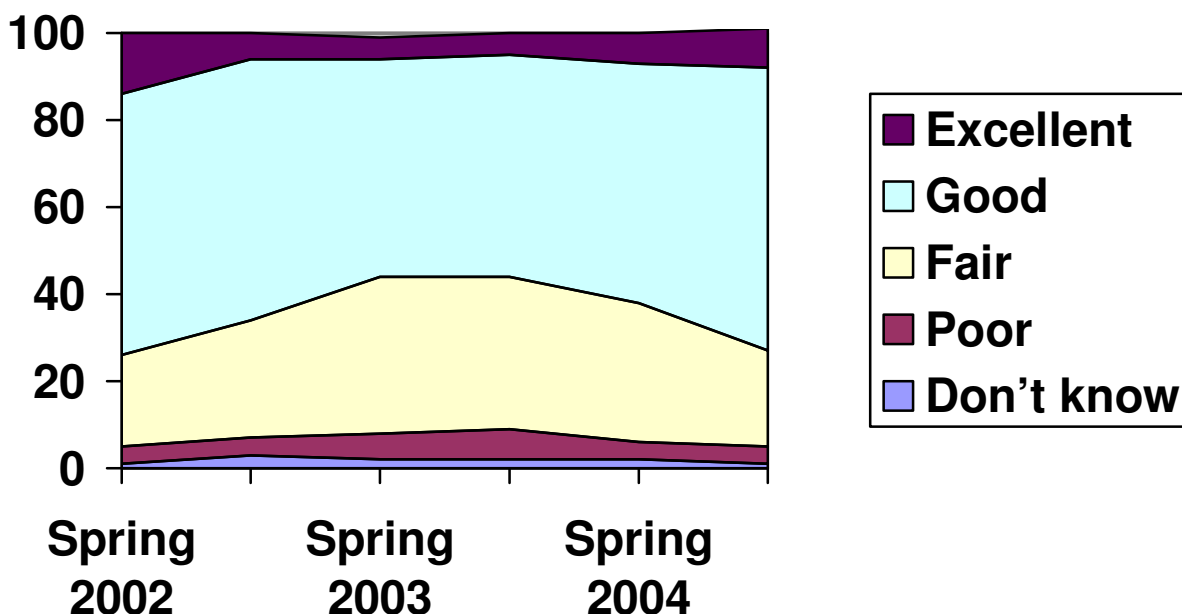
Economic Conditions – Upswing Continues

The upswing in public perceptions of the state of the local economy found last spring continued this fall (see Table 6). A year ago, the combined total saying either “excellent” or “good” was only 56 percent. It moved up to 62 percent in spring and reached 74 percent in the most recent fall 2004 survey.

Table 6: Perceptions of Economic Conditions

	Spring 2002	Fall 2002	Spring 2003	Fall 2003	Spring 2004	Fall 2004
Excellent	14	6	5	5	7	9
Good	60	60	50	51	55	65
Fair	21	27	36	35	32	22
Poor	4	4	6	7	4	4
Don't know	1	3	2	2	2	1
Total	101	100	99	100	100	101

Economic Conditions



Based on the statistically significant relationship between views of the revenue/tax cap and the state of the economy, it seems likely that the decline in concerns about the ability of the county to provide services was paralleled by perceptions of an improving economy. While only 12 percent of those saying that the cap had *not* hurt the ability of the county to provide services thought that the economy was in fair condition, those believing that the cap *had* hurt the ability of the county were more than three times more likely to believe that the economy's condition was only fair (41 percent).

Perceptions of the economy were statistically significantly related to residents voting intentions: 52 of those saying the economy was excellent or good intended to vote for Bush, while only 43 percent of those saying fair or poor intended to follow suite.

Anticipating the Future: Public's View of Life in 2010

The survey asked voters the following question: "Thinking about this County's future, please tell me whether you think the following things will be better, about the same or worse in 2010." The results are shown on Table 7.

The results indicate that other than economic conditions, only general impressions or private lives are likely to be better six years from now. Each of the other specific areas of concern show that more people believed that things would be worse in 2010 than believed they would be better. The most pessimistic forecast concerned four issues: crime, water and air quality, local taxes and traffic congestion. Despite a few changes since this set of questions was asked in spring 2003, there was an underlying consistency in the public's responses between the two polls.

Table 7: Public's Perception of Issues in 2010

	Better	About the same	Worse	Fall 2004 Better-Worse	Spring 2003 Better-Worse	Change + = Improve	Unsure	No answer
General responsiveness of County government to citizens' needs	23	47	20	3	-6	+9	8	1
Local taxes	5	26	64	-59	-64	+5	5	1
Water and air quality	17	32	49	-32	-37	+5	2	1
Ethics in local government	20	44	26	-6	-10	+4	9	2
Health care	24	32	36	-12	-16	+4	8	1
Economic conditions	33	40	23	10	9	+1	3	1
Growth and development	30	20	46	-16	-16	0	3	1
Crime	11	42	42	-31	-30	-1	4	1
The overall quality of life in the County	33	43	20	13	17	-4	3	1
Public schools	28	28	36	-8	-4	-4	7	1
Family life	27	45	20	7	13	-6	5	2
Spiritual or religious life	27	47	15	12	19	-7	7	4
Traffic congestion	3	5	92	-89	-80	-9	0	0

Underage Drinking

The next section of the survey queried respondents about underage drinking. Asked whether this problem was very, somewhat or not very serious in their communities, the sample was mixed (see Table 8). A plurality perceived the problem as very serious (41 percent), but a majority (51 percent) only saw it as somewhat or not very serious. Women tended to see this problem as more serious than men, with 45 percent of the former saying “very serious” compared to only 35 percent of men.

Table 8: How Serious is Underage Drinking in your Community

	Percent
Very serious	41
Somewhat serious	29
Not very serious	22
No opinion	9
Total	101

Elaborating upon the theme of underage drinking, the survey continued by asked, “Again, thinking about the problem of underage drinking in your community, are any of the following

specific issues a concern to you?” The respondents were read a list of five items, to which they could state whether each was a concern. The results are provided in Table 9. In all cases, these concerns were more likely to be cited by women over men by a statistically significant amount.

Table 9: Underage Drinking - Concerns

	Concern	Not a concern	No opinion
Drinking and driving	90	9	1
Sale or other access to alcohol by minors	79	18	3
Alcohol use at teen parties	82	10	8
Safety at special events such as high school sports	61	27	12
Date abuse or rape	75	11	14

County Council and Zoning/Subdivision Code Revision

The survey asked several questions focused on legislation revising the existing zoning and subdivision laws in the County. The first simply asked whether respondents were aware that the Council was considering such legislation. Table 10 shows that less than one-quarter were aware.

Table 10: Aware of Legislation?

Aware of legislation	Percent
Yes	23%
No	76%
Not sure, don't know	2%
Total	101

Two specific areas under discussion as part of the revision process included possible changes to the ease with which homeowners might “create a small apartment within their houses” and the areas and conditions under which bed and breakfast establishments might be placed in residential areas. Respondents were asked whether they supported or opposed each initiative.

Table 11: Support for Specific Changes in Zoning Laws

Goal	Support	Oppose	Unsure	Don't know
8.1 Make it easier for homeowners to create a small apartment within their houses	52	29	17	2
8.2 Make it easier bed and breakfast facilities to be placed in residential areas	44	40	14	2

As shown on Table 11, a large majority supported the idea of homeowners being able to create small apartments within their houses. A plurality also supported the idea of making it easier for bed and breakfast facilities to be placed in residential areas. Nataf said, “it is possible that the public recognizes a need for more housing options, especially those that seem relatively non-intrusive.”

Lastly, the survey asked respondents to state how effective county policies had been regarding growth and planning. As indicated on Table 12, the public felt there was room for improvement, with more than six times as many saying “not very effective” (38 percent) as those saying “very effective” (6 percent).

Table 12: Effectiveness of County Growth/Planning Policies

Very effective	6
Somewhat effective	40
Not very effective	38
Don't know	17

Chesapeake Bay: How to Clean it Up?

A question asked, “If you were to be charged \$50 a year for cleaning up the bay, where do you think that \$50 would be best spent: helping control agricultural run-off, purchasing land in sensitive areas to prevent development, or improving sewage treatment plants?” As seen on Table 13, a plurality favored using the hypothetical \$50 fee to improve sewage treatment plants (46 percent) followed by agricultural run-off (23 percent). “During the last legislative session, the “flush tax” was passed and was meant to help improve sewage treatment plants. Given the play that proposal received, it is possible that the public came to understand that as the primary problem for cleaning up the Bay,” Nataf offered.

Table 13: Where would \$50 fee be Best Spent?

Agricultural run-off	23
Purchasing land in sensitive areas	16
Improving sewage treatment plants	46
Other answer (usually “do all three”)	11
Unsure, no answer	4
Total	100

Electronic Voting and Paper Records

As part of the spring 2004 survey, respondents were asked about their impressions of the new voting machines. As seen on Table 14, an overwhelming majority thought that the machines had accurately recorded their votes.

Table 14: Use of New Voting Machines (Spring 2004)

	Yes	No	Unsure/N.A.
Did you have any trouble understanding how to use the voting machine?	3	97	0
Are you confident that the machine accurately recorded	86	9	4

your vote?			
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When asked whether a paper trail should be provided, most said that the system was acceptable without one.

Table 15: Do you think that a paper receipt indicating your voting choices should be provided, or is the system acceptable just as it is? (Spring 2004)

Provide paper receipt	35
Acceptable as is	63
Other answer	1
No answer	1

This fall, respondents were asked again about the possible need to have a paper record, with the question’s wording changed as follows: “The electronic voting system being used in Maryland currently does not provide any method to conduct a manual recount in a disputed election. Do you have confidence in the system as it is, or do you believe that it would be worth the cost of adding a paper record to verify results?”

When faced with the question of how to resolve matters in a disputed election, potential voters were more likely to favor a paper record, the option chosen by a plurality (49 percent) of the sample. “These results may show that while voters thought the system worked well enough last spring during the primaries, they were more concerned that there would be no way to verify results in a hypothetical disputed election,” said Nataf.

Table 16: Should a Paper Record be Provided (Fall 2004)

Provide paper record	49
Acceptable as is	42
Other answer	5
No answer	4

Terrorism/Emergency Preparedness

The fall 2004 survey included two questions about terrorism and emergency preparedness.

One asked residents whether they believed that local government could effectively respond in the event of a terrorist attack. The percentage saying “very prepared” stayed fixed at 15 percent, but there was a small decline in the numbers saying “somewhat prepared” (from 55 to 49 percent) and a rise in the percent saying “not very prepared” (27 percent) (see Table 17).

Table 17: How Prepared are Local Authorities in Event of a Terrorist Attack

	Fall 2001	Spring 2002	Fall 2002	Spring 2003	Fall 2003	Spring 2004	Fall 2004

Very prepared	13	8	16	10	15	15	15
Somewhat prepared	47	49	52	48	54	55	49
Not very prepared	30	35	22	37	24	18	27
Don't know, no answer, unsure	11	8	10	4	7	11	9
Total	101	100	100	100	100	99	100

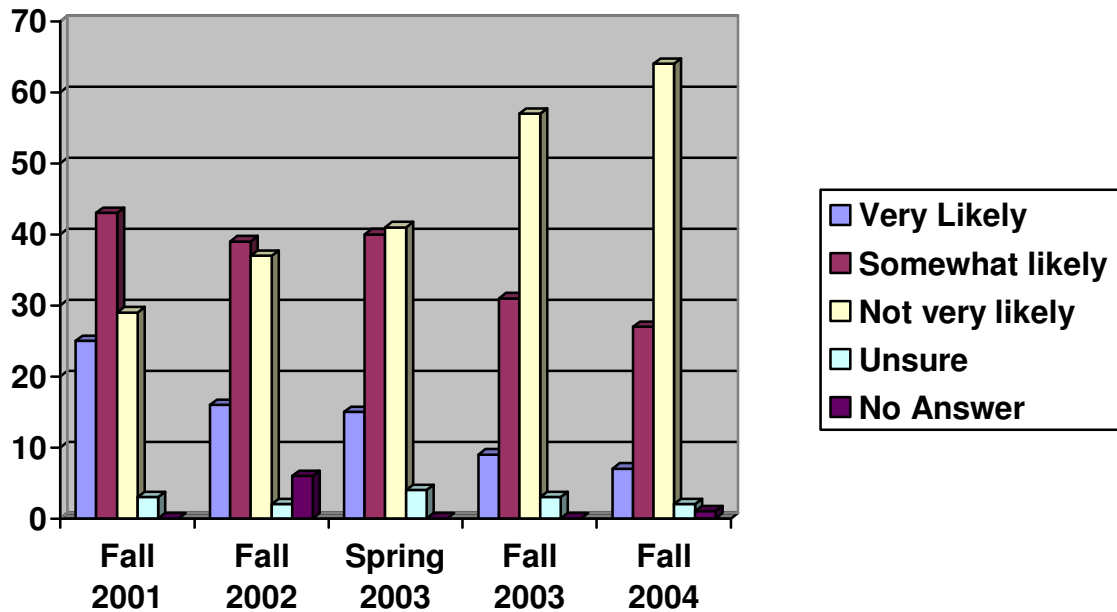
The other question asked residents about the probability of a terrorist attack on a location within Anne Arundel County over the next year. Nearly two-thirds said “not very likely” (64 percent) and only 7 percent said “very likely.” Compared to previous times in which this question had been asked, these findings provided the lowest threat perception scores since September 11, 2001 (see Table 18 and Graph 5). “Without new terrorist events, the public apparently diminishes the probability of new acts terrorism,” Nataf suggested.⁴

Table 18: How Likely is Terrorist Attack within the County during the Next Year?

	Fall 2001	Fall 2002	Spring 2003	Fall 2003	Fall 2004
Very Likely	25	16	15	9	7
Somewhat likely	43	39	40	31	27
Not very likely	29	37	41	57	64
Unsure	3	2	4	3	2
No Answer	0	6	0	0	1

⁴ In keeping with earlier findings suggesting that Bush backers were more concerned with terrorism than were Kerry supporters, among the latter, 71 percent felt that a terrorist attack was “not very likely” compared to only 58 percent of Bush backers.

Graph 5: Likelihood of Terrorist Attack in County



Methodology

The survey polled a random sample of 303 county residents who were at least 18 years old. Phone numbers were derived from a database of listed numbers as well as computer chosen, randomly assigned numbers. The statistical margin of error for the overall sample was about 6 percent; it was higher for subgroups based on party, gender, and other characteristics. For information about this survey or CSLI, call Dan Nataf at 410-777-2733, or visit the CSLI web site at www2.aacc.edu/csli where this press release is posted under "Recent Surveys."

CSLI Semi-Annual Survey – Fall, 2004

1.0 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	Circle one
Crime	6
Terrorism	1
Drugs	3
Growth/overpopulation- too much development	14
Traffic congestion/problems	17
Education, problems with schools	12
Taxes – too high	10
Inefficient government, wasteful spending	1
Corruption in government/politicians are bad	1
Environment (e.g., air or water pollution, saving the Bay)	5
Economy – (e.g., no jobs, high cost of living, business closing or losses)	8
Other answer	9
Unsure/No Answer	13
	100

N=302

2.0 Overall, would you say that the County is headed in the right direction or in the wrong direction? N=302

- (1) **Right direction 58%**
- (2) **Wrong direction 19%**
- (0) **Unsure or don't know 19%**

3.0 Some people believe that the County's ability to provide certain services has declined due to the County's cap on revenue from property taxes. Others think it hasn't affected services.

Do you think the revenue cap has hurt the ability of the County to provide services to its citizens? N=303

- (1) **Yes 29%**
- (2) **No 56%**
- (0) **Don't Know, No Answer 15%**

4.0 Thinking about our County's economy, how would you rate economic conditions in Anne Arundel County today -- excellent, good, only fair, or poor? N=303

(1) Excellent **9%** (2) Good **65%** (3) Fair **22%** (4) Poor **4%** (0) Don't Know, N.A. **1%**

5.0 Thinking about the this County's future, please tell me whether you think the following things will be better, about the same or worse in 2010.

	Better	About the same	Worse	Unsure	No answer	Cases
5.1 Traffic congestion	3	5	92	0	0	303
5.2 Local taxes	5	26	64	5	1	302
5.3 Crime	11	42	42	4	1	301
5.4 Public schools	28	28	36	7	1	300
5.5 Ethics in local government	20	44	26	9	2	301
5.6 Growth and development	30	20	46	3	1	300
5.7 Water and air quality	17	32	49	2	1	300
5.8 Health care	24	32	36	8	1	301
5.9 Economic conditions	33	40	23	3	1	299
5.10 Family life	27	45	20	5	2	299
5.11 Spiritual or religious life	27	47	15	7	4	299
5.12 General responsiveness of County government to citizens' needs	23	47	20	8	1	299
5.13 The overall quality of life in the County	33	43	20	3	1	301

6.0 The next couple of questions have to do with underage drinking. Thinking about your community, how serious is the problem of underage drinking: very serious, somewhat serious or not very serious? N=301

(1) Very serious **41%** (2) Somewhat serious **29%**
 (3) Not very serious **22%** (0) No opinion, no answer **9%**

Again, thinking about the problem of underage drinking in your community, are any of the following specific issues a concern to you?

	Concern	Not a concern	No opinion	Cases
6.1 Drinking and driving	90	9	1	301
6.2 Sale or other access to alcohol by minors	79	18	3	301
6.3 Alcohol use at teen parties	82	10	8	300
6.4 Safety at special events such as high school sports	61	27	12	299
6.5 Date abuse or rape	75	11	14	299

6.6 Comparing underage drinking with underage drug use, which is the more serious problem in your community? N=298

(1) Underage drinking **37%** (2) Underage drug use **28%**
 (3) Same (volunteered) **18%** (0) No opinion **17%**

7.0 The County Council is currently considering legislation that would revise the current rules on growth and development significantly. Were you aware of this proposed legislation? N=297

(1) Yes **23%** (2) No **76%** (0) Not sure, don't know **2%**

8.0 Now I will read you a few changes which this legislation might achieve; tell me if you generally support, oppose or are unsure about each goal.

Goal	Support	Oppose	Unsure	Don't know	Cases
8.1 Make it easier for homeowners to create a small apartment within their houses	52	29	17	2	296
8.2 Make it easier bed and breakfast facilities to be placed in residential areas	44	40	14	2	295

9.0 How effective have County policies been regarding growth and planning: N=295

(1) Very effective **6%** (2) Somewhat effective **40%**
 (3) Not very effective **38%** (0) Don't know **17%**

10.0 The following question has to do with the Chesapeake Bay. If you were to be charged \$50 a year for cleaning up the bay, where do you think that \$50 would be best spent: helping control agricultural run-off, purchasing land in sensitive areas to prevent development, or improving sewage treatment plants? N=295

(1) agricultural run-off **23%**
 (2) purchasing land in sensitive areas **16%**
 (3) improving sewage **46%** (4) Other answer **11%**

(write in: most frequent answer, split among all three (0) Unsure, no answer **4%**

11. Are you currently registered to vote? N=293

(1) Yes **92%** (2) No **8%** (0) Not sure, don't know **3%**

12. Did you vote in the March primary elections? N=286

(1) Yes **49%** (2) No **48%** (0) Not sure, don't know **3%**

13. How likely are you to vote in the November elections, very likely, somewhat likely or not very likely? N=291

(1) Very likely **90%** (2) Somewhat likely **4%** (3) Not very likely **5%**
 (0) Unsure/don't know **1%**

14. IF YES TO QUESTION 12: The electronic voting system being used in Maryland currently does not provide any method to conduct a manual recount in a disputed election. Do you have confidence in the system as it is, or do you believe that it would be worth the cost of adding a paper record to verify results? N=271

- (1) Confident in system as it is **42%**
- (2) Provide paper record **49%**
- (3) Other answer **5%**
- (0) No answer **4%**

15 Did you watch any of the Presidential debates? (1) Yes 85% (2) No 14% N=293 (0) No answer 1%

IF YES to 15 → 15.1 How much influence did the debates have on your choice of Presidential candidate: no influence, some influence or a great influence? N=251

- (1) no influence **59%** (2) some influence **30%**
- (3) great influence **9%** (0) no answer **2%**

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

- (1) Approve **47%** (2) Disapprove **42%** (3) Unsure **9%** (0) No answer **2%**

17. If the 2004 Presidential election were being held today, would you vote for George W. Bush and Dick Cheney, the Republicans, or John Kerry and John Edwards, the Democrats, or some other candidates? N=287

- (1) Bush/Cheney **47%** (2) Kerry/Edwards **36%** (3) Other candidates **3%**
- (4) Wouldn't vote **0%** (5) Unsure at this time **8%** (0) No answer **5%**

18. Thinking about the reasons for your choice for President, please rate the following items in terms of how important each is in shaping your vote:

Item	Very important	Somewhat important	Not very important	No opinion	Cases
18.1 Candidate's leadership ability or vision	86	11	1	2	290
18.2 Candidate's position on domestic issues	79	17	1	2	291
18.3 Candidate's position of foreign policy issues	83	13	1	2	290
18.4 Your dislike of the candidate's opponent	28	18	46	9	289

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? N=288

Economy	Terrorism	Iraq	Healthcare	Other issue (write in issue)	No opinion
20%	26%	23%	15%	15% (most here said "all")	1%

20. In your opinion, how likely is a terrorist attack on a location within Anne Arundel County over the next year, very likely, somewhat likely or not very likely? N=289

- (1) Very likely 7%
- (2) Somewhat likely 27%
- (3) Not very likely 64%
- (4) Unsure 2%
- (0) No answer 1%

21. How prepared do you believe local authorities to be in the event of a terrorist attack in Anne Arundel County, very prepared, somewhat prepared, not very prepared? N=288

- (1) Very prepared 15%
- (2) Somewhat prepared 49%
- (3) Not very prepared 27%
- (4) Unsure 8%
- (0) No answer 1%

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

22.0 With which political party, if any, are you registered? N=272

- (1) Democratic 40%
- (2) Republican 42%
- (3) Independent 10%
- (4) None 7%
- (5) Other 0%

23. Which of the following best describes your political beliefs: Liberal, Moderate or Conservative? N=287

- (1) Liberal 14%
- (2) Moderate 48%
- (3) Conservative 33%
- (0) Other, No Answer 5%

24. I am going to read some categories of age classifications. Please stop me when I reach the category in which your age falls. N=288

- (1) 18 to 29 8%
- (2) 30 to 44 26%
- (3) 45 to 59 35%
- (4) 60 or more 30%
- (0) No Answer 1%

25. 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. N=288

(1) less than a high school degree	2%	(5) post graduate work	27%
(2) a high school degree	14%	(0) No Answer	2%
(3) some college or a two-year degree	33%		
(4) completed college with a bachelor's degree	23%		

26. I am going to read some categories relating to income. Please stop me when I reach the category in which your household income falls. N=287

- (1) Less than \$30,000 **5%**
- (2) \$30,000 to \$50,000 **20%**
- (3) \$50,000 to \$75,000 **21%**
- (4) \$75,000-\$100,000 **16%**
- (5) \$100,000-\$150,000 **17%**
- (6) Over \$150,000 **8%**
- (0) No Answer **13%**

27. Which of the following employment categories best describes your situation? N=288

Employed full time for a company in the private sector or self employed	47%
Employed full time for government (IF YES ask: State, County, City or Federal (circle one).	14%
Employed part-time	10%
Retired	22%
Unemployed and seeking a job	2%
Unemployed and not seeking a job	3%
No answer	2%

28. Regarding race, how would you describe yourself? N=288

- (1) Black **6%**
- (2) White **86%**
- (3) Hispanic **1%**
- (4) Asian **1%**
- (5) Other or mixed racial background **2%**
- (0) No Answer **4%**

29. Regarding Religion, how would you describe yourself? N=287

- (1) Non-practicing, Agnostic or Atheist **15%**
- (2) Protestant **37%**
- (3) Catholic **27%**
- (4) Jewish **1%**
- (5) Other **17%**
- (0) No Answer **4%**

30. What is your current marital status? N=287

Single 15%	Married 68%	Separated or Divorced 10%	Widowed 6%	Other 7%	Won't say 0%
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31. How long have you lived in Anne Arundel County: Median 22 years N=283

32. Do you have any children living at home who currently attend public or private schools? N=288

- (1) No **68%**
- (2) Yes, public school only **22%**
- (3) Yes, private school only **7%**
- (4) Yes, both public and private school **1%**
- (0) No answer **1%**

33. Do you have a friend or family member who is currently serving in the military in Iraq or Afghanistan? N=288

- (1) Yes **35%** (2) No **64%** (0) No answer **1%**

33. Gender N=299

- (1) Male **37%**
- (2) Female **63%**

34. Zipcode

		Frequency	Valid Percent
Valid	20711.00	5	1.7
	20724.00	4	1.3
	20751.00	2	.7
	20755.00	1	.3
	20764.00	1	.3
	20776.00	3	1.0
	20778.00	1	.3
	21012.00	19	6.4
	21032.00	2	.7
	21035.00	6	2.0
	21037.00	14	4.7
	21054.00	7	2.3
	21056.00	1	.3
	21060.00	7	2.3
	21061.00	27	9.0
	21076.00	4	1.3
	21077.00	1	.3
	21090.00	9	3.0
	21108.00	12	4.0
	21113.00	11	3.7
	21114.00	14	4.7
	21122.00	30	10.0
	21127.00	1	.3
	21140.00	2	.7
	21144.00	14	4.7
	21146.00	28	9.4
	21226.00	3	1.0
	21401.00	49	16.4
	21402.00	1	.3
	21403.00	19	6.4
21407.00	1	.3	
	Total	299	100.0
Missing	System	4	
Total		303	