

*Statewide
Survey*
OF
LOUISIANA
VOTERS

MARCH 2004

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About the Poll

This statewide poll was a joint effort developed and conducted by Harris, DeVille & Associates, Inc., and Southern Media & Opinion Research, Inc. The poll was designed to address issues of concern to Louisiana voters and legislative issues likely to be brought up during the 2004 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature and in the upcoming elections for U.S. Senate and President. This survey represents the 16th consecutive year of comparable data collection.

Interviews were conducted by telephone with 700 self-professed, registered voters statewide between Wednesday, March 17 and Monday, March 29, 2003.

The overall margin of error for the statewide statistics obtained from the survey data is plus or minus 3.8 percent at the 95 percent level of confidence. In other words, there is a 95 percent certainty that the statistics presented from the results obtained on this survey of 700 voters statewide will be no more than 3.8 percent above or below the figure that would be obtained if all of the voters in the state would have been interviewed.

A random start, interval sample design was used to select telephone numbers from a sample frame of telephone numbers for registered likely voter households. A quota ensuring nominal male voter participation in the study was imposed. A statistical weighting procedure was employed to adjust the sample to the actual percentage of registered voters based upon voter race.

NOTE: Previous polling data is referenced by data collection date and not by publication date. Totals may not equal 100 percent due to rounding.

This statewide survey covers a number of topics of importance to voters in Louisiana. This report presents what we consider to be the more significant findings of general interest from the poll. Substantial additional data were collected and analyzed. If you are interested in obtaining any additional data or a more detailed analysis, please contact us:

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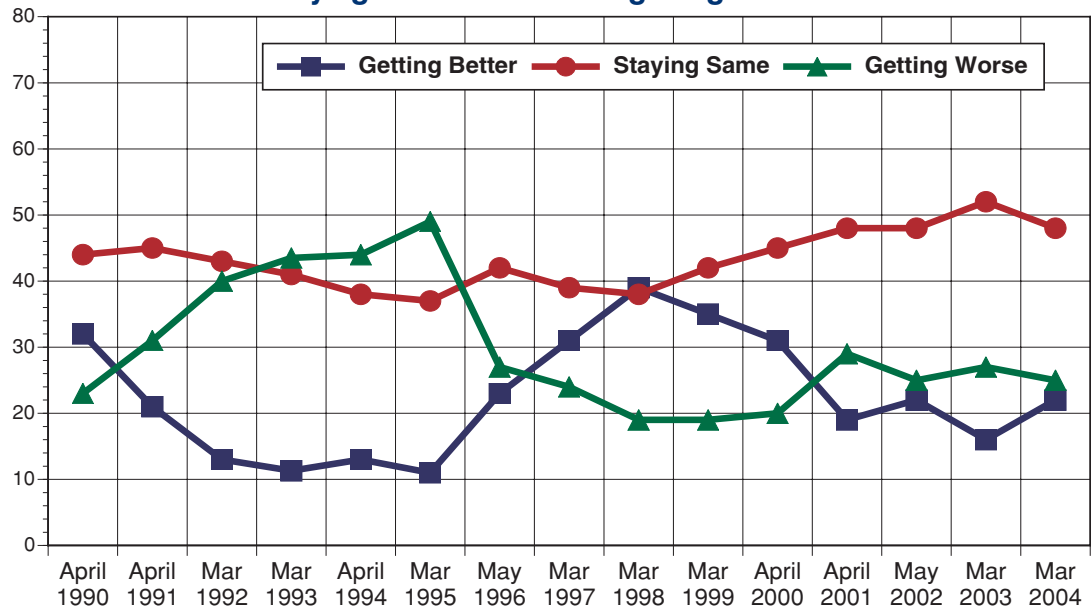
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Conditions in Louisiana

When asked if they thought conditions in Louisiana are getting better, staying about the same or getting worse, about half of the respondents (48 percent) thought conditions were staying about the same, one in five (22 percent) thought they were getting better and one in four (25 percent) thought conditions were getting worse. Voters in the Acadiana and North Louisiana were the most positive. Survey results showed that African American female respondents, River Parish respondents, and those with a less than a high school education were more likely to think conditions were getting worse.

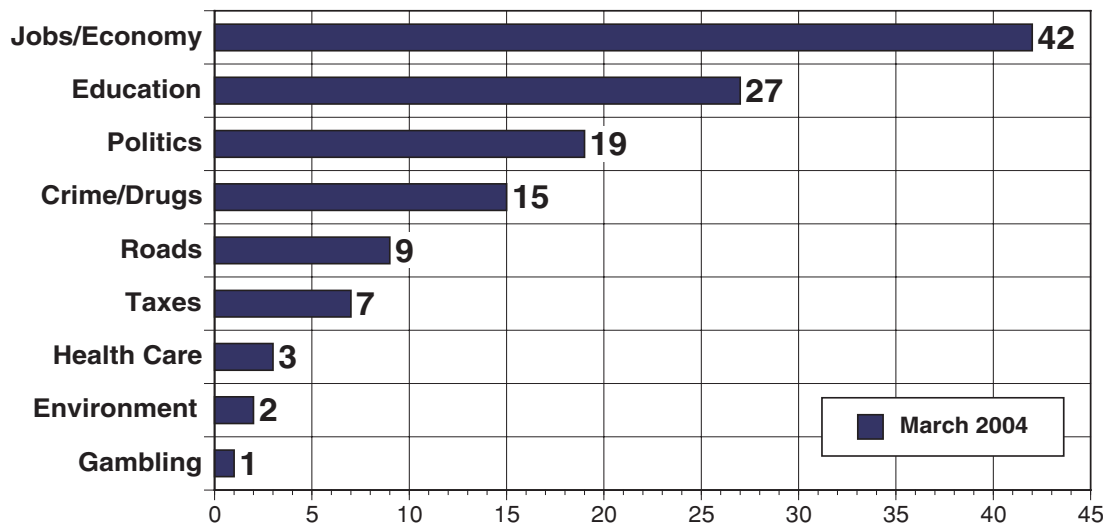
For the past four years, more people say things are getting worse than better; while those that think that things are staying the same continue an upward trend.

Overall, do you think conditions in Louisiana are getting better, staying about the same or getting worse?



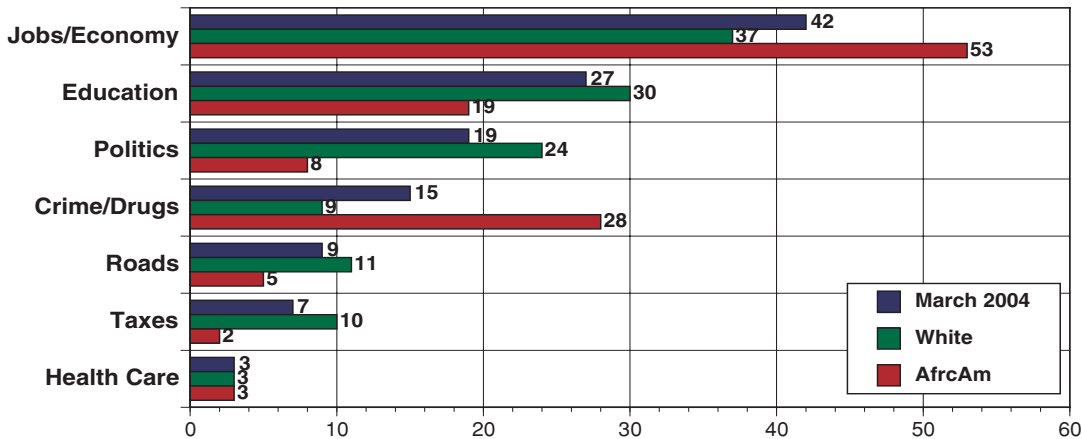
When asked what are the main problems that keep Louisiana from being a better place to live, concern over jobs and the economy (46 percent) dominates. Other significant concerns include education (27 percent), politics (19 percent) and crime/drugs (15 percent). Roads, taxes and the healthcare were also mentioned as problems in Louisiana.

What would you say are the main problems which keep Louisiana from being a better place to live?



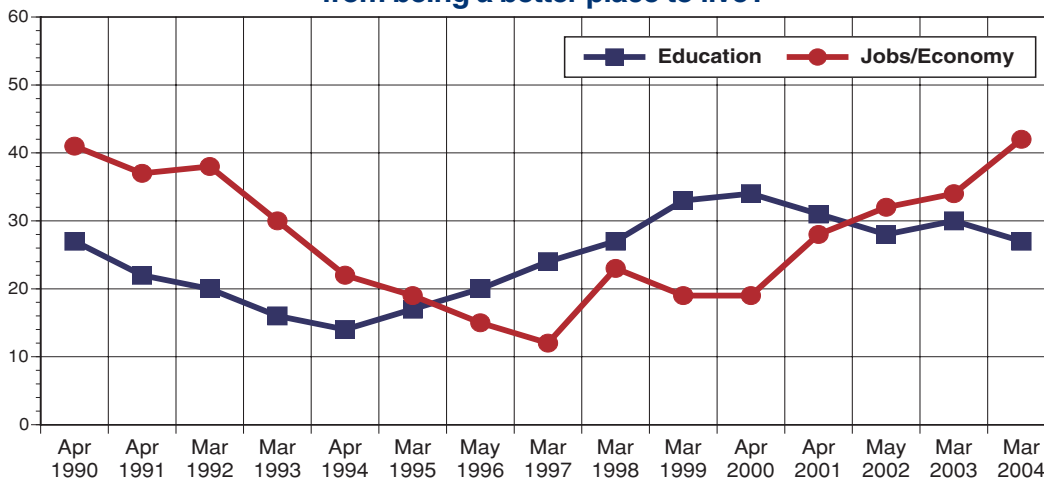
Concern in the African American community centers on jobs and the economy and crime and drugs.

What would you say are the main problems which keep Louisiana from being a better place to live?



Historical data shows that concern over jobs and the economy has increased steadily while concern over education, while significant, is declining relative to jobs.

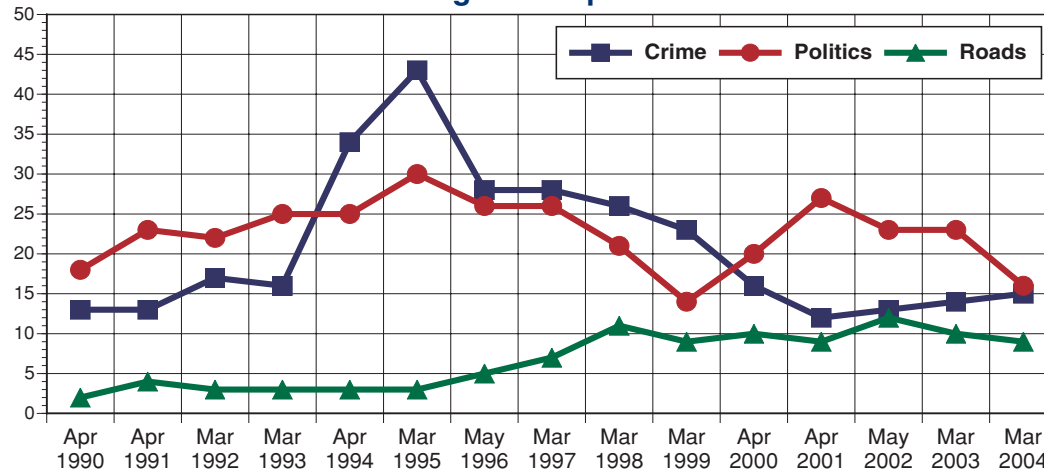
What would you say are the main problems which keep Louisiana from being a better place to live?



It's all about jobs and the economy ... everything else runs a distant second.

Concern over crime and politics continues to move downward, while concern over roads has increased steadily.

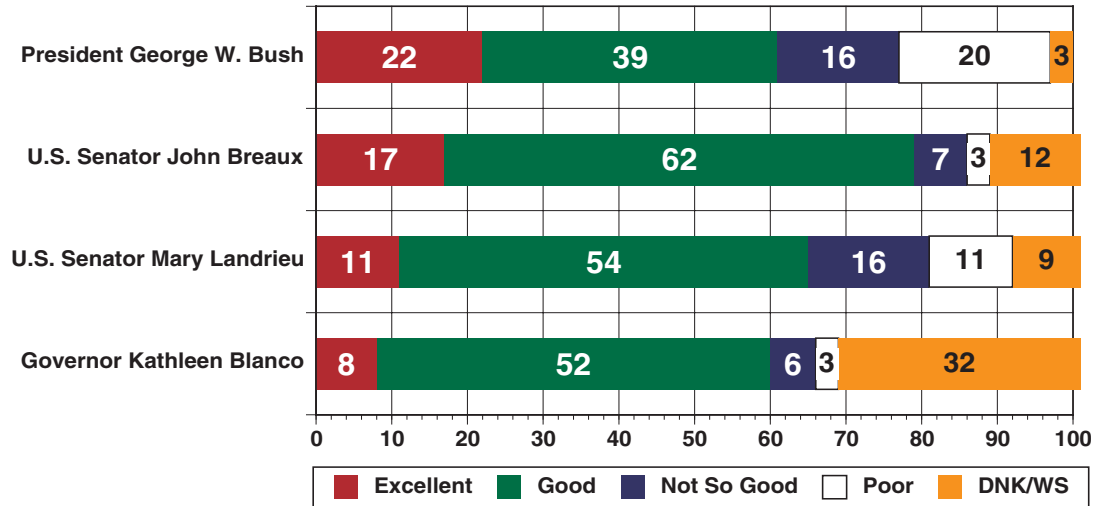
What would you say are the main problems which keep Louisiana from being a better place to live?



Fall Elections

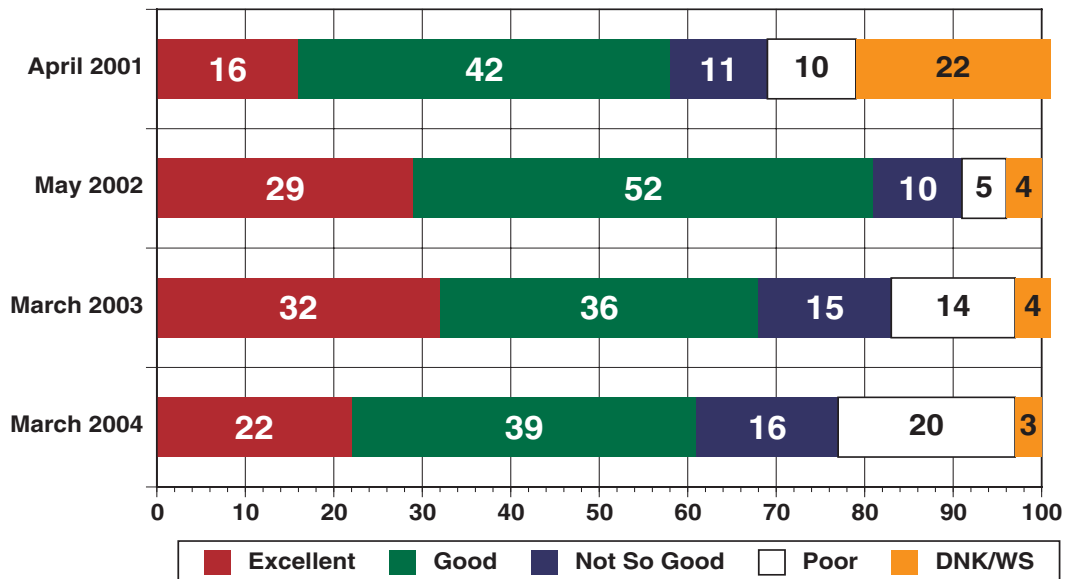
Voters were asked to rate the performance of four high profile leaders – the President, the Governor, and Louisiana’s two US Senators. Out-going U.S. Senator Breaux will retire with nearly 80 percent favorability; followed by junior Senator Landrieu with a 65 percent positive response. New Governor Kathleen Blanco enjoys a 60 percent positive but has about one-third of the respondents taking a “wait and see” attitude.

Please tell me if you think the following elected officials are doing an excellent, good, not so good or poor job.



President Bush also holds about a 60 percent favorability rating and a nearly 40 percent unfavorable rating. This represents a nearly 20 percent plummet in positives in the past two years.

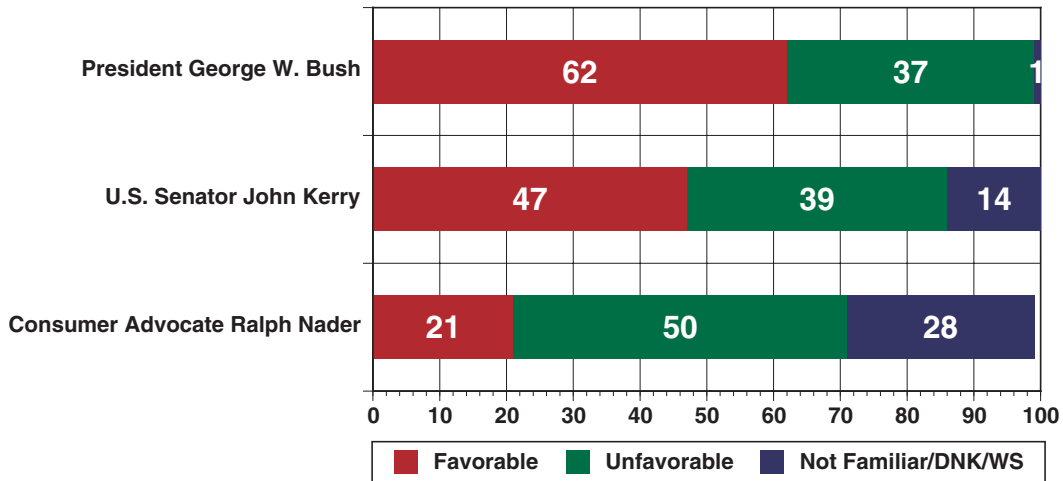
Please tell me if you think the following elected officials are doing an excellent, good, not so good or poor job. PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH



Presidential Race

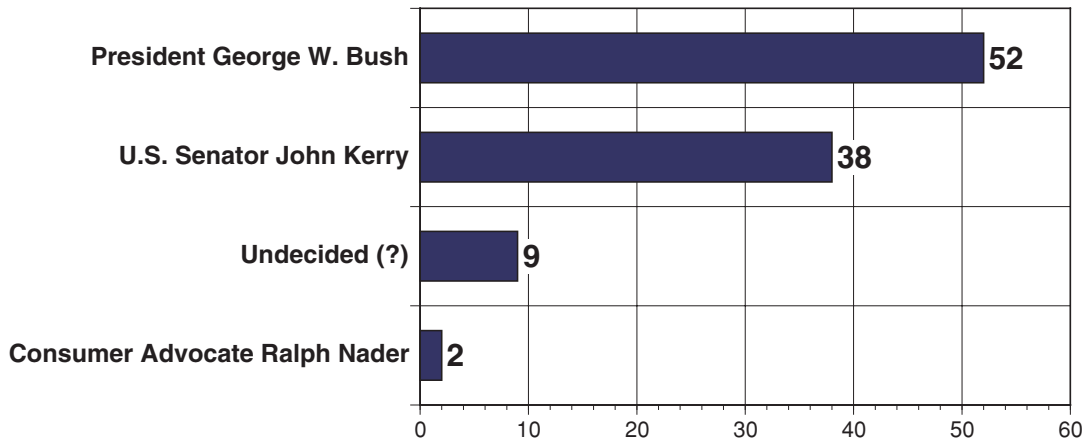
Voters were asked to give their impressions of three publicly announced candidates for US President – President George W. Bush, U.S. Senator John Kerry and Consumer Advocate Ralph Nader. President Bush enjoys a little less than 2:1 positive to negative ratio (62 percent to 37 percent), while Senator Kerry has about a 1.2:1 positive to negative ratio (47 percent to 39 percent).

Please tell me if your impression of the following people is very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable or very unfavorable:



Respondents were asked to select their choice for President from the three candidates. President Bush received a slight majority (52 percent) followed by Kerry (38 percent) and Nader (2 percent). Nearly 10 percent expressed that they were not certain whom they would vote for from that field.

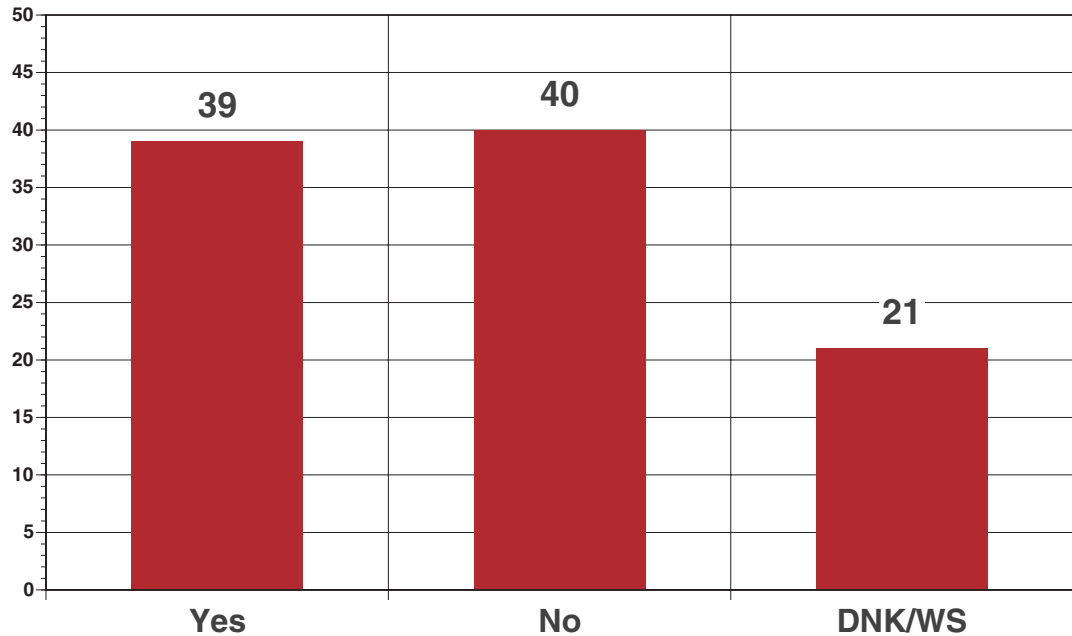
If the election for President of the United States were held today between Republican George W. Bush, Democrat John Kerry and Independent Ralph Nader, for whom would you vote?



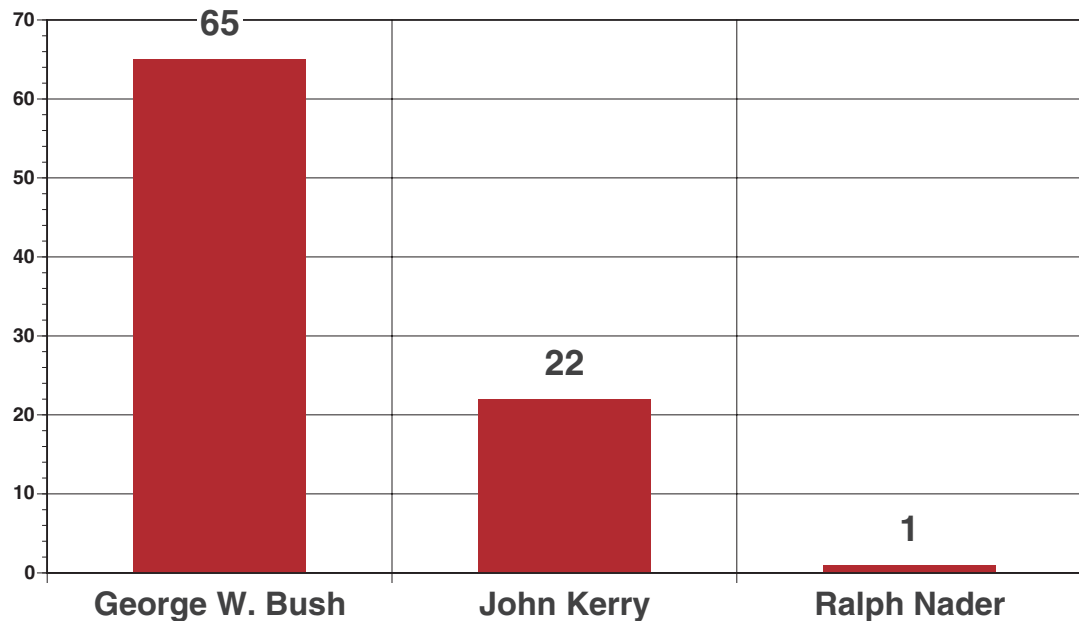
World events, namely Iraq and terrorism, have a huge impact on how Louisiana voters will vote this fall. President Bush retains a small lead in popular vote with the heat of the campaign yet to begin.

Voters were equally split on whether or not Osama Bin Laden would be captured prior to the November election. Republicans were more likely to respond yes (51 percent) compared to Democrats (34 percent). When asked which candidate would benefit from the capture of Osama Bin Laden, a majority of respondents (65 percent) replied that Bush would benefit most.

Do you think the United States will catch Osama Bin Laden before the Presidential election in November?



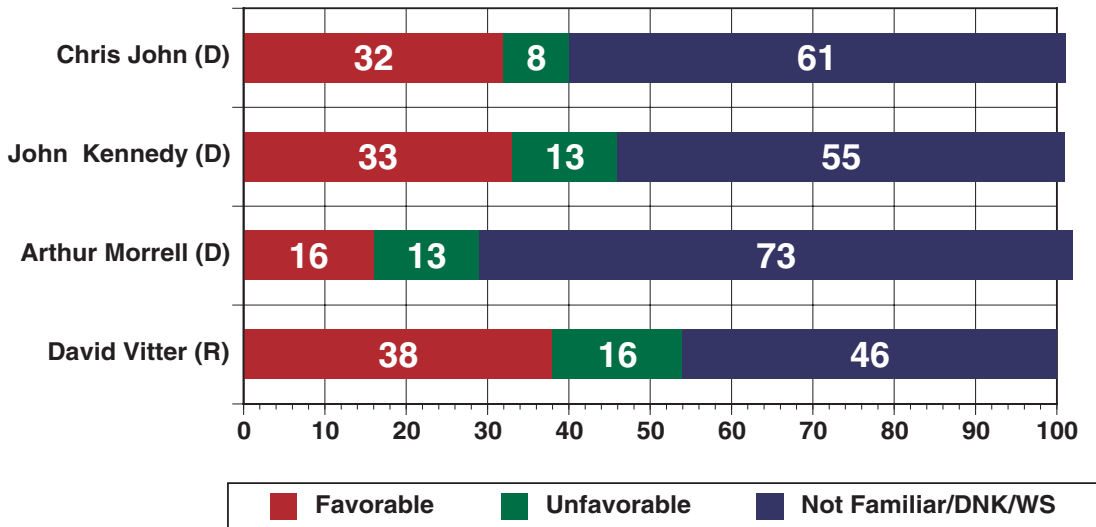
If Osama Bin Laden is caught before the Presidential election in November, who do you think will be elected President: Bush, Kerry or Nader?



U.S. Senate Race

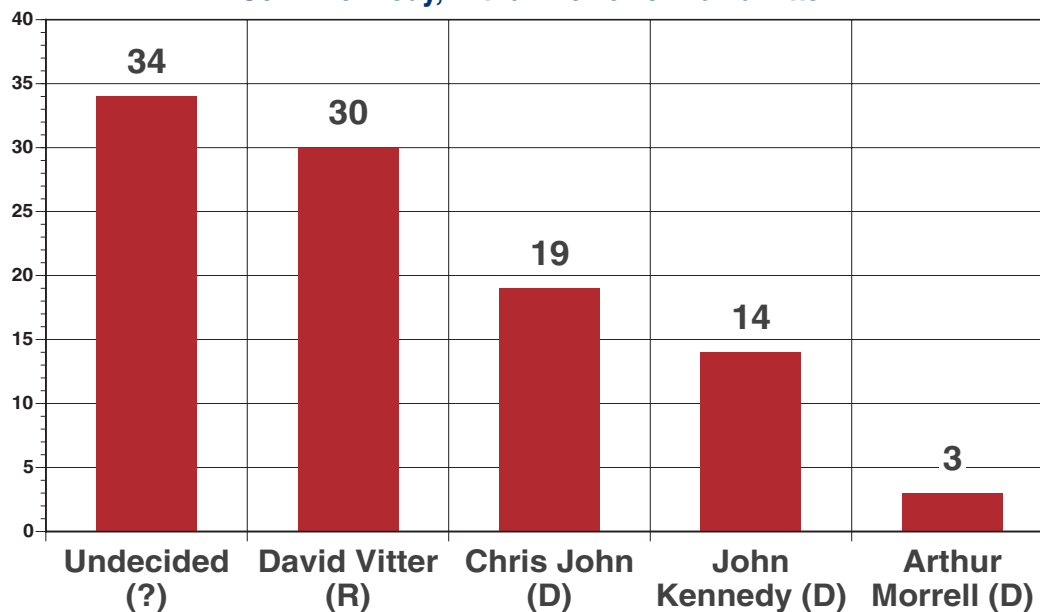
Four candidates publicly announced intentions to replace Senator Breaux at the time the poll was conducted – U.S. Congressmen Chris John and David Vitter, State Treasurer John Kennedy and State Representative Arthur Morrell. Voters were asked to give their impressions of the four candidates. All candidates suffer from limited statewide name recognition – only Congressman Vitter had name recognition exceeding 50 percent. Negatives for all candidates are low – less than 20 percent.

US Senator John Breaux has announced he will not run for re-election to the United States Senate this fall. Of the people who may be candidates to fill the vacated seat, what is your impression of that person: favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable, very unfavorable or not familiar with:



Voters were then asked to select their choice to replace Senator Breaux from the four announced candidates. One third of the voters were undecided, followed by Vitter (30 percent), John (20 percent), Kennedy (14 percent), and Morrell (3 percent). Vitter ran strongest in his home area (52 percent in New Orleans) as did John (47 percent in Acadiana/SW Louisiana) and Kennedy (24 percent in the Florida/River Parishes).

If the election for U.S. Senate were held today, would you vote for Chris John, John Kennedy, Arthur Morrell or David Vitter?

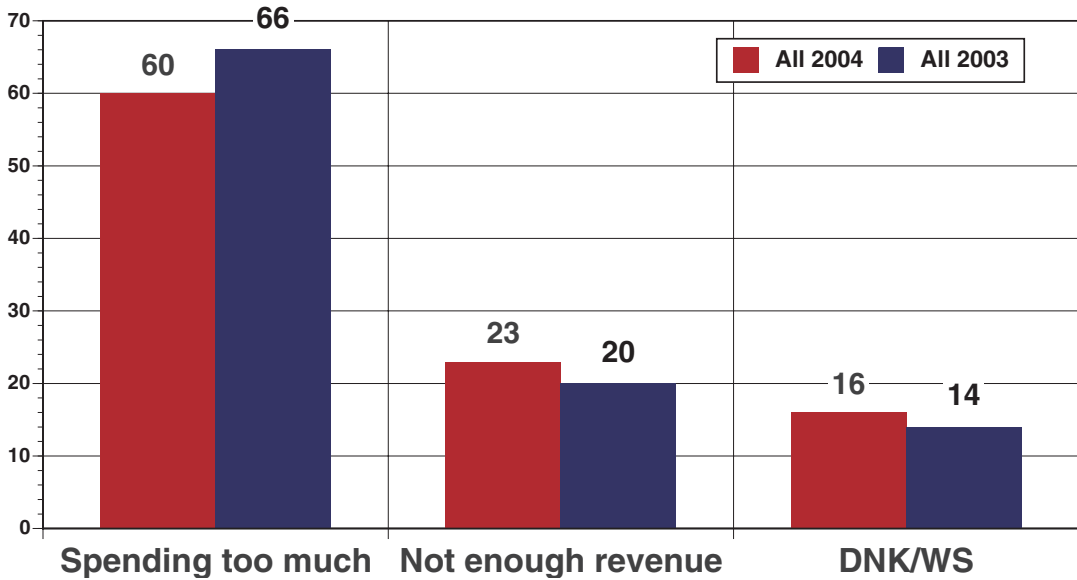


State Fiscal Situation

Voters were asked to give their views on the state's financial situation. Nearly two-thirds of the respondents (60 percent) felt that the problem stems from spending too much, rather than the state having insufficient revenues. Responses have changed slightly from last year.

Government leaders say the state is facing a financial crisis. Do you think state government's financial problems are caused by spending too much or not having enough money to do its job?

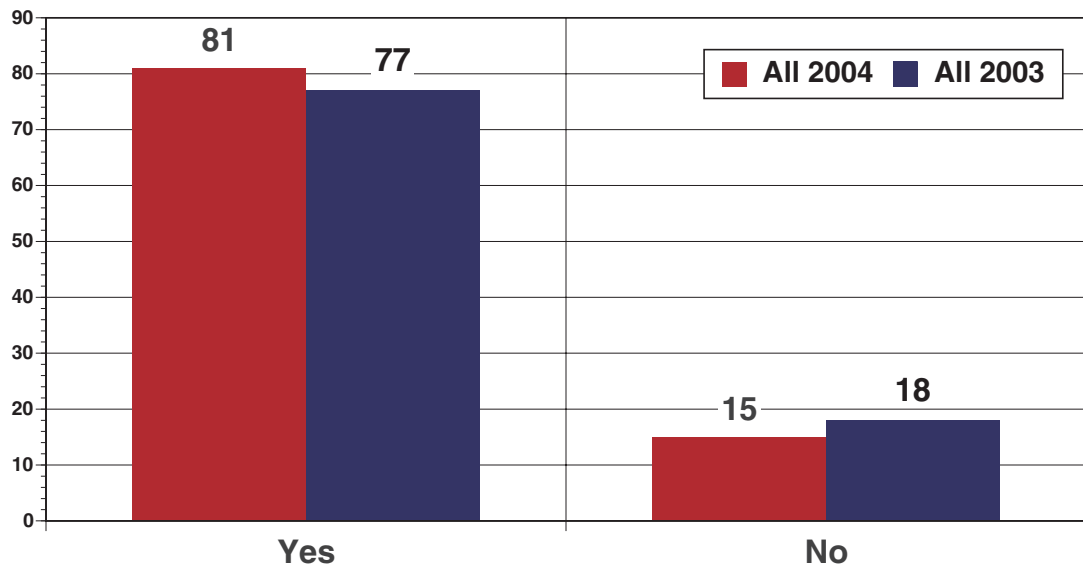
In spite of recognized financial hard times, the majority of the public says "quit spending so much!"



Highways

A large majority of respondents (81 percent) think Louisiana needs to find a way to increase funding for state roads.

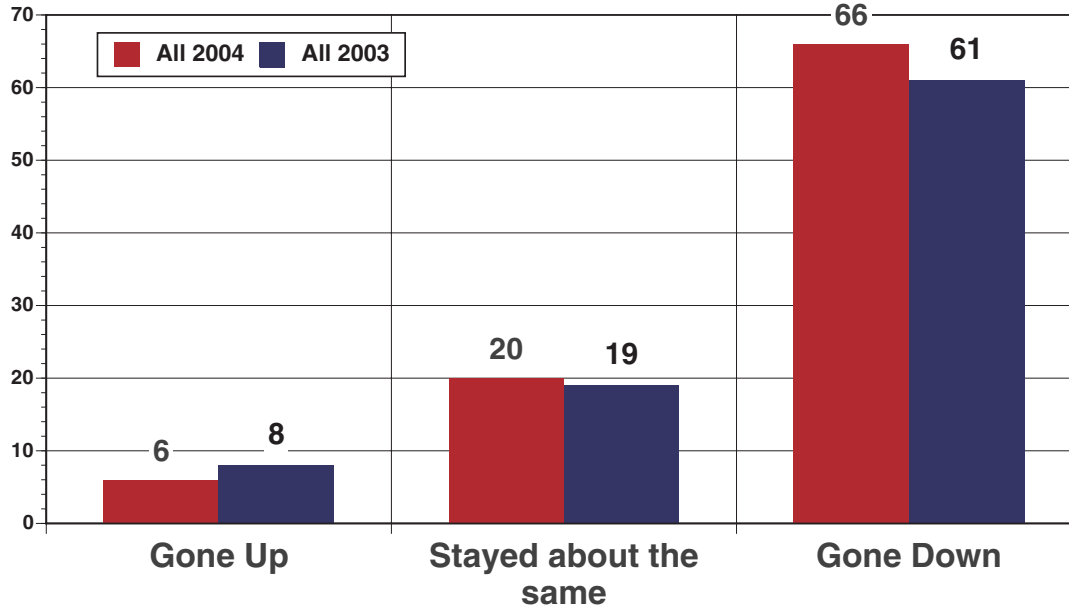
Do you think Louisiana needs to find a way to increase funding for state roads?



Manufacturing Jobs

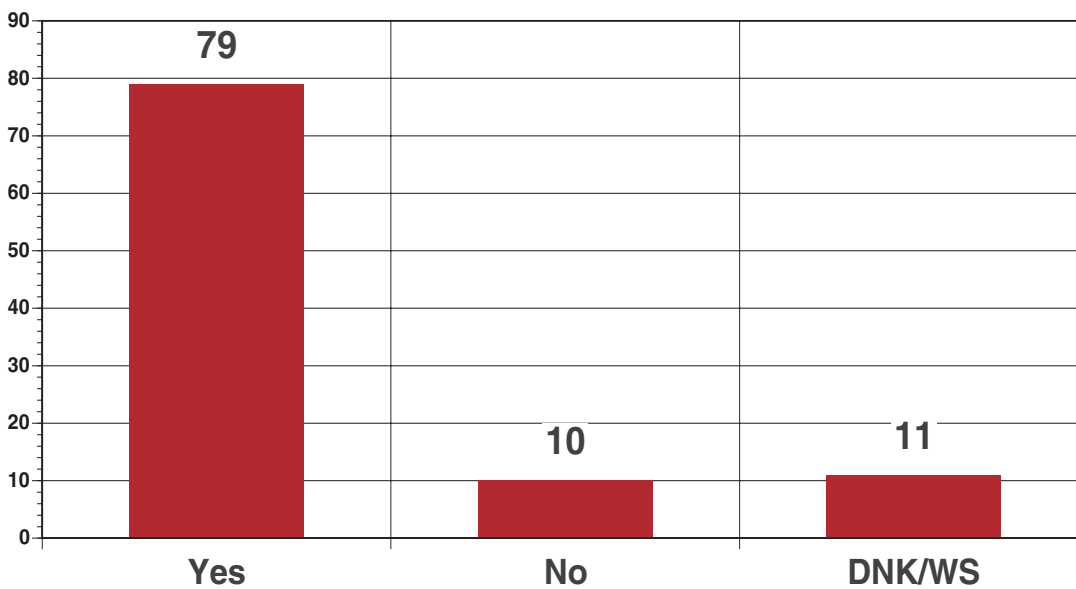
There is clear recognition among the voting public that the number of manufacturing jobs in the state has gone down in recent years (66 percent).

Do you think the number of manufacturing jobs in Louisiana has gone up, stayed about the same or gone down over the past two years?

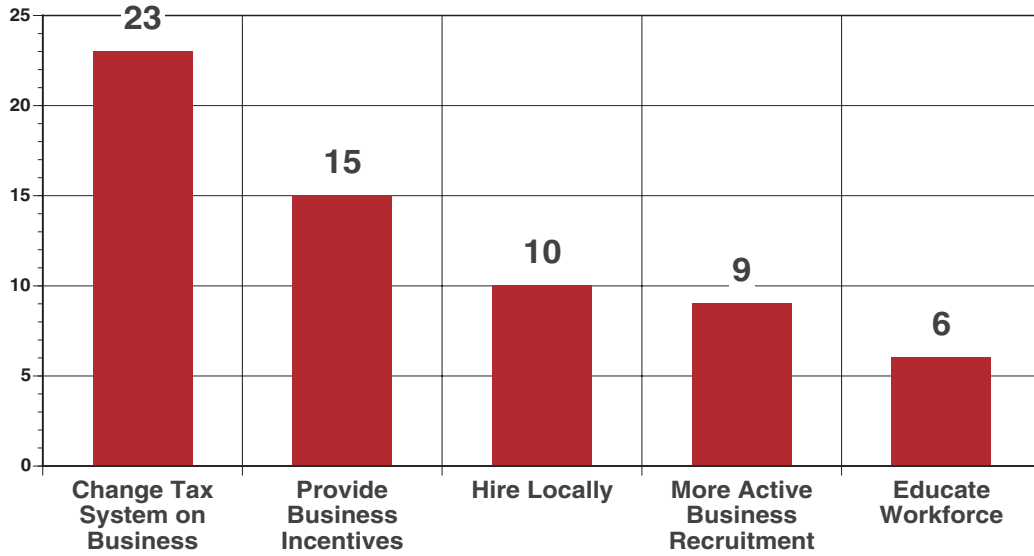


Voters clearly see a role and responsibility for state government in retention of manufacturing jobs. They were asked what kind of things government should be doing to preserve existing jobs. Responses included making changes to the tax system, providing additional incentives to business and more active recruitment of businesses.

Over the past five years, Louisiana has lost 30,000 manufacturing jobs. In your opinion, can state government do something to stop the loss of jobs?

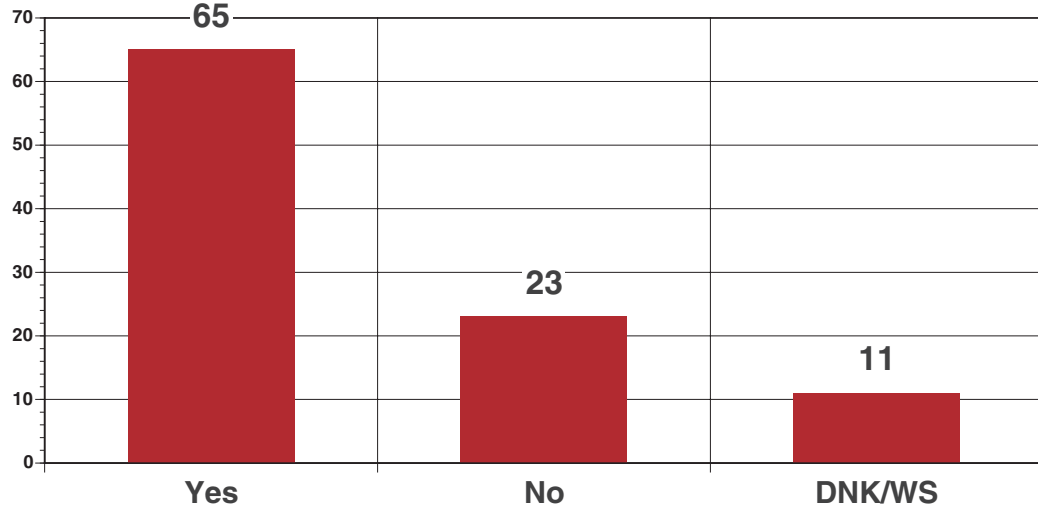


What can state government do to stop the loss of jobs? (n=550)



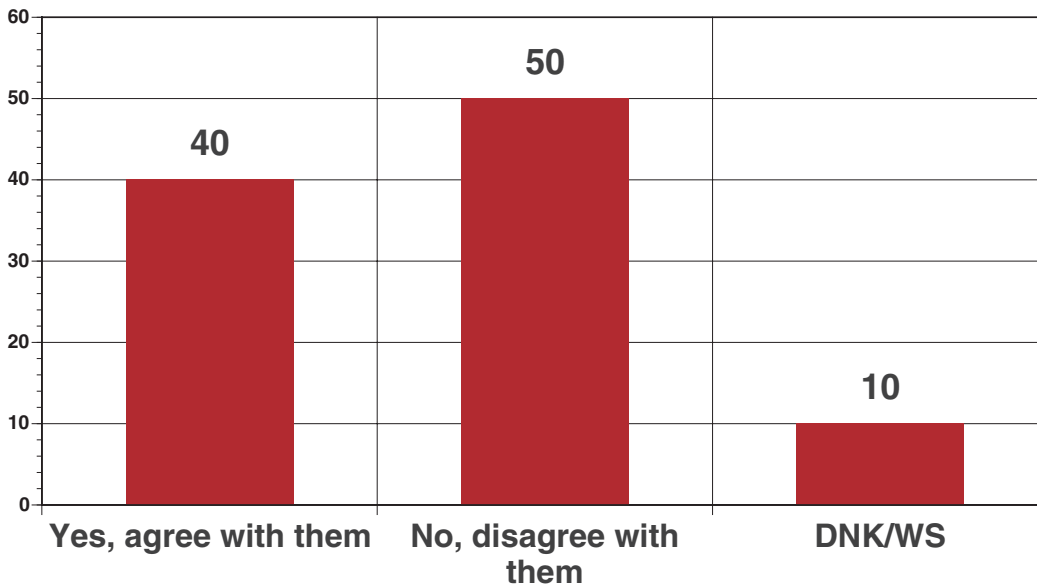
There is also strong recognition that reducing state taxes on business will generate new jobs. A majority of voters believe that the state can cut taxes on business and not severely impact essential state services.

Do you think reducing state taxes on business will help create new jobs in Louisiana?



Half of the voters disagree with the premise that businesses are being greedy for supporting tax cuts when the state claims to need the money for essential services.

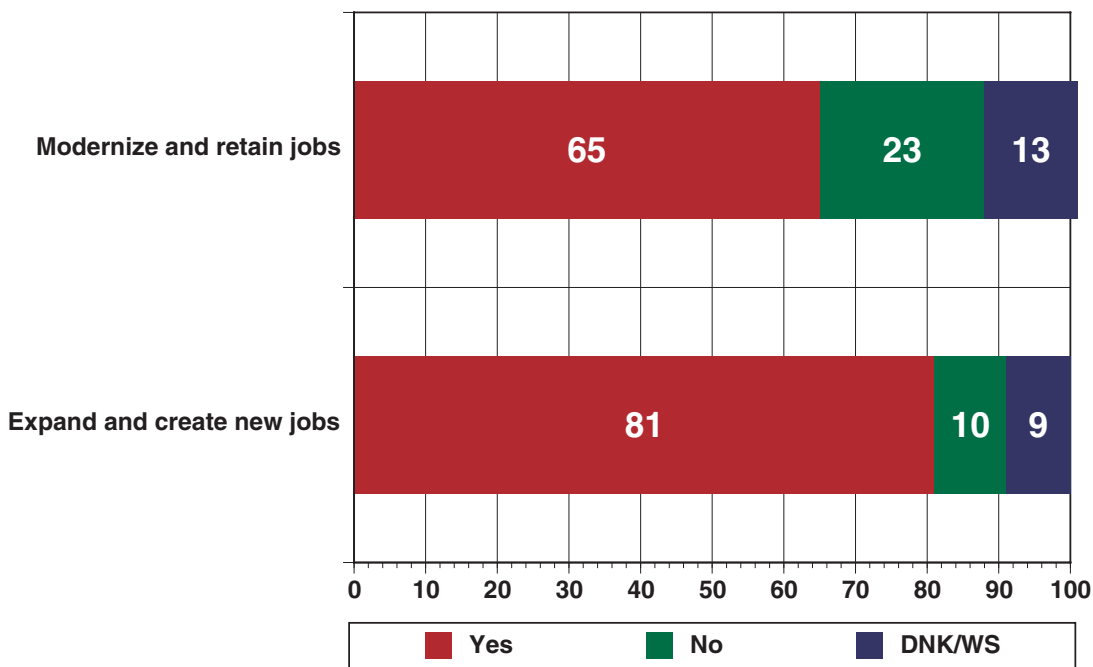
Do you agree or disagree with state government leaders who say business is being greedy for wanting a tax cut at a time when those tax dollars are needed for state services for health care and higher education?



We're losing our best jobs! Elected officials – do something about it! Reduce taxes, provide incentives, educate workers – just do something!

There is strong support among voters for the state granting tax exemptions to business. Nearly two-thirds support tax exemptions to businesses that modernize and retain jobs; even more (80 percent) support tax exemptions for businesses that expand and create jobs.

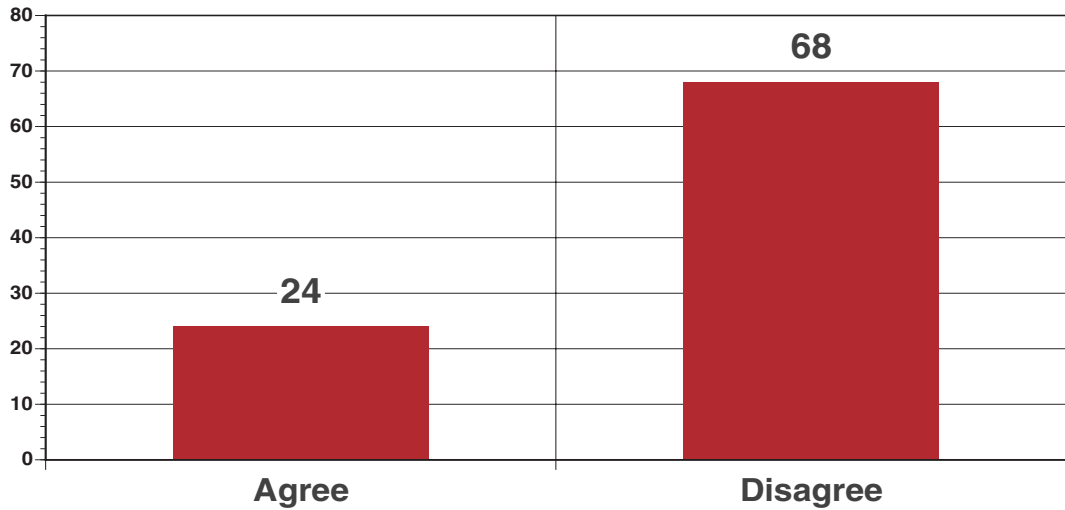
Should state government grant tax exemptions to manufacturing companies that:



Prescription Drugs

Over two-thirds of voters disagree with placing limits on prescription drugs available to Medicaid patients. Strongest disagreement was among Democrats, lower income voters and African American voters.

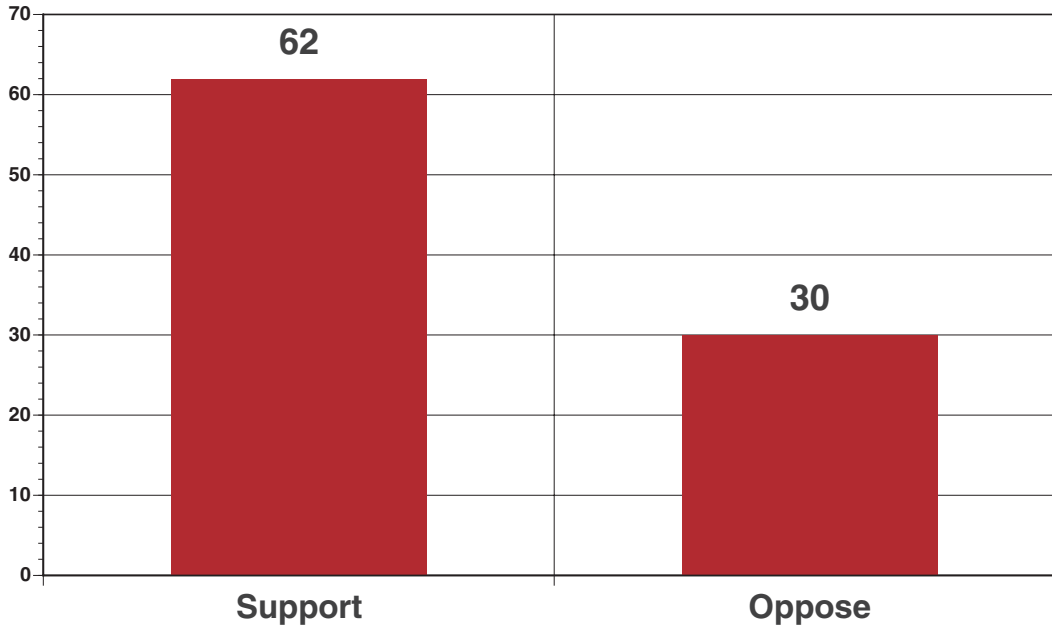
In an effort to reduce cost to the state, the Department of Health and Hospitals had placed limits on the type and number of prescription drugs available to Medicaid patients. Do you agree or disagree with placing limits on prescription drugs available to Medicaid patients?



Gay Marriage

Sixty two percent of voters support an amendment to the U.S. Constitution prohibiting gay marriage. Support for the constitutional ban is strongest among Republicans, whites and upper income voters. A slightly larger number of voters support a state law banning same sex marriages.

Would you support or oppose an amendment to the U.S. Constitution which would prohibit gay marriages?



Would you support or oppose a state law banning same sex marriages?

