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The Arkansas Poll, 2006 Summary Report

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Arkansas Poll Website: <http://plsc.uark.edu/arkpoll/>

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*Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding

Most Important Problem

Which of the following is the most important problem or issue facing people in Arkansas today? ¹	Percent
• Healthcare (including insurance)	30
• Education	20
• The Economy	17
• Crime (including drugs and violence)	16
• Gas/Fuel Prices	8
• Taxes	7
• Don't Know/Refused	2

Public Figure Approval Ratings/Upcoming Elections

Do you approve or disapprove of the way Mike Huckabee is handling his job as governor?	Approve	Disapprove	DK/Ref	
1999	66%	13%	21%	
2000	69%	14%	17%	
2001	70%	17%	13%	
2002	50%	35%	15%	
2003	47%	38%	16%	
2004	58%	29%	12%	
2005	58%	27%	15%	
2006	55%	32%	13%	
Do you ... Blanche Lincoln ... as a U.S. Senator?				
1999	46%	17%	37%	
2001	51%	13%	36%	
2002	50%	16%	35%	
2003	55%	10%	35%	
2004	55%	19%	26%	
2005	55%	17%	28%	
2006	49%	23%	28%	
Do you ... Mark Pryor ... as a U.S. Senator?				
2003	52%	11%	37%	
2004	50%	18%	32%	
2005	56%	12%	32%	
2006	50%	21%	29%	
Do you ... George Bush ... as president?				
2001	87%	9%	3%	
2002	61%	32%	7%	
2003	47%	46%	7%	
2004	50%	45%	5%	
2005	38%	56%	7%	
2006	36%	58%	6%	
If the next governor's election were held today ... for whom would you most likely vote? (<i>very likely voters only</i>)	Beebe	Hutchinson	Other	DK/Ref
2005	47%	40%	3%	11%
2006	51%	38%	1%	9%
	Favor	Oppose		DK/ Ref
Referred Question 1 deals with higher education....	73%	20%		8%
Referred Amendment 1 would make bingo and raffles....	67%	27%		6%

¹ In odd-numbered years, the Arkansas Poll records and codes the open-ended answers of respondents. In even-numbered years, respondents are asked to choose from the most frequently mentioned issues of the previous year.

Current Issues

First, in general, would you say you favor stricter gun control, less strict gun control, or should no change be made to existing gun control laws?	Stricter	Less Strict	No Change	DK/ Refused
1999	50% ²	31%	15%	4%
2000	39%	15%	42%	4%
2001	36%	17%	44%	4%
2002	36%	15%	45%	4%
2003	38%	17%	42%	4%
2004	38%	12%	45%	5%
2005	36%	15%	43%	6%
2006	37%	11%	47%	5%
Do you favor laws that would make it more difficult for a woman to get an abortion, favor laws that would make it easier to get an abortion or should no change be made to existing abortion laws?	More Difficult	Easier	No Change	DK/ Refused
1999	45%	14%	32%	9%
2000	43%	11%	40%	6%
2001	46%	13%	35%	7%
2002	43%	13%	38%	6%
2003	47%	13%	33%	7%
2004	42%	10%	40%	7%
2005	44%	9%	39%	8%
2006	44%	16%	34%	6%
Do you approve or disapprove of a law that would prevent gays and lesbians from serving as foster parents?	approve	disapprove		DK/ Refused
2005	46%	46%		8%
2006	46%	48%		6%
Do you approve or disapprove of gays and lesbians serving as foster parents?				
2006	28%	66%		6%
Which of the following policy positions most closely resembles your own view regarding relationships between two people of the same sex?				
• Gay couples should be allowed to legally marry				
2005			15%	
2006			15%	
• Gay couples should be allowed to form civil unions or domestic partnerships, but not legally marry				
2005			22%	
2006			26%	
• There should be no legal recognition of a gay couple's relationship				
2005			54%	
2006			54%	
• don't know/refused				
2005			9%	
2006			5%	

² In 1999 respondents were not offered the “no change” option; this response was recorded only if volunteered.

Climate Change/Global Warming

How convinced are you that global warming or the greenhouse effect is actually happening? Are you...		Do you think global warming is an urgent problem requiring immediate attention or a longer-term problem that requires more study before government action is taken?	
• Completely convinced	32%	• Urgent problem	44%
• Mostly convinced	30%	• Longer-term problem	46%
• Not so convinced	20%	• Not a problem (only if volunteered)	3%
• Not at all convinced	13%	• Unsure (only if volunteered)	3%
• Don't Know/Refused	7%	• Don't Know/Refused	4%
Should President Bush develop a plan to reduce the emission of gases that may contribute to global warming?			
• Yes			76%
• No			16%
• Don't Know/Refused			8%
I'm going to read you some programs being considered as a way for the federal government to try to reduce future global warming. As I read each statement, please tell me whether you favor or oppose the adoption of each program.	Favor	Oppose	Don't Know/Refused
• Require that all gasoline be formulated to produce lower emissions even if it adds an additional cost of five cents to the price of gasoline.	62%	33%	5%
• Increasing taxes on gasoline so people either drive less, or buy cars that use less gas.	18%	77%	5%
• Increasing taxes on electricity so people use less of it.	11%	88%	1%
• Giving companies tax breaks to produce more electricity from water, wind and solar power.	74%	21%	6%
How interested would you be in personally joining a carpool for your commute ...?			
• Very interested			16%
• Somewhat interested			24%
• Not so interested			10%
• Not at all interested			34%
• Not applicable (retired, etc. ... only if volunteered)			15%
• Don't Know/Refused			1%
Do you think most Americans would be willing to join a carpool as a way to conserve gasoline?			
• Yes			36%
• No			56%
• Don't Know/Refused			8%

9-1-1 Emergency Response/Disaster Preparedness

W/in the last 3 years, have you or a member of your household called 911 for emergency assistance ...?		How serious or urgent was the emergency? Was it...	
• Called 911 self	18%	• Not at all serious	7%
• Family member called 911	6%	• Somewhat serious	23%
• Both	1%	• Serious	20%
• Neither	76%	• Very serious	27%
• Don't Know/Refused	0%	• Extremely Serious	23%
		• Don't Know/Refused	1%
What type of emergency was it?			
• Medical	57%	• Animal Control	1%
• Police-crime	13%	• Other	8%
• Police-traffic	14%	• Don't Know/Refused	0%
• Fire	8%		
How satisfied or dissatisfied were you/they with the total set of emergency services provided ...? Were you...		And, what was your overall satisfaction with how the 911 operator ... handled the call? Were you...	
• Very satisfied	54%	• Very satisfied	61%
• Satisfied	27%	• Satisfied	28%
• Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	5%	• Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	1%
• Dissatisfied	4%	• Dissatisfied	4%
• Very dissatisfied	9%	• Very dissatisfied	4%
• Don't Know/Refused	1%	• Don't Know/Refused	2%
How important or unimportant is it to you that your local community improves its 911 emergency responses? Is it		How related or unrelated are 911 emergency services to disaster preparedness and response? Are they....	
• Very important	53%	• Very related	42%
• Important	31%	• Related	37%
• Neither important nor unimportant	8%	• Neither related nor unrelated	3%
• Unimportant	3%	• Somewhat unrelated	6%
• Very unimportant	2%	• Not at all related	4%
• Don't Know/Refused	3%	• Don't Know/Refused	8%
If a major disaster were to hit your local community tomorrow, how prepared or unprepared are your local community officials to respond to this disaster?		How important is it that your local community officials increase the level of disaster preparedness?	
• Very well prepared	8%	• Very important	53%
• Prepared	32%	• Important	36%
• Neither prepared nor unprepared	9%	• Neither important nor unimportant	5%
• Somewhat unprepared	23%	• Unimportant	1%
• Not at all prepared	12%	• Very unimportant	2%
• Don't Know/Refused	16%	• Don't Know/Refused	4%

Water Quality

Do you think the quality of the water that is delivered to your house or apartment by your local water delivery system is:...		Do you believe that your monthly water bill is correctly characterized as...	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very good 	34%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expensive 	28%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequate 	43%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acceptable 	55%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor 	13%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inexpensive 	10%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other (well water, if volunteered) 	8%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has a well (if volunteered) 	2%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't Know/Refused 	2%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't Know/Refused/Other 	5%
Considering the quality of the river, stream or lake ... that you use for recreational activities, in the next 10 to 20 years do you expect that the water quality will...		Considering only the rivers and lakes within 30 miles of your home, what do you believe has happened to the quality of water during the past 10 years? Has it...	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve 	10%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved 	9%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diminish 	38%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stayed the same 	44%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remain about the same 	47%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gotten worse 	39%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't recreate (volunteered) 	2%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't Know/Refused 	8%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't Know/Refused 	3%		
Considering the amount of water in the river, stream or lake near you that you use for recreational activities, in the next 10 to 20 years do you expect that quantity will...		And what about the total cost of using that river or lake, do you think the cost will increase, decrease or remain about the same in the next 10 years?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase 	8%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase 	71%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decrease 	41%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decrease 	2%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remain about the same 	45%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remain about the same 	21%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't recreate (volunteered) 	1%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't recreate (volunteered) 	1%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't Know/Refused 	5%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't Know/Refused 	5%
Many municipal water supplies consist of surface water reservoirs and streams. How concerned are you that these water supplies could become targets for terrorist acts, such as poisoning?		Over the last 10 years do you believe that the quality of the water in Arkansas's rivers and lakes has...	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very concerned 	30%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved? 	15%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderately concerned 	47%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stayed the same? 	37%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unconcerned 	22%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gotten worse? 	40%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't Know/Refused 	2%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't Know/Refused 	8%
Current Arkansas laws make it difficult for Arkansas water to be sold outside the state. Do you believe that this is good for the well-being of Arkansans? (half-sample; alternate wording produced nearly same result)			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definitely yes 			45%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally yes 			30%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally no 			13%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definitely no 			11%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't Know/Refused 			1%

Political Party and Ideology

Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent, or what?	Republican	Democrat	Indep't	Other	DK/ Refused
1999	23%	35%	31%	4%	7%
2000	23%	36%	35%	0%	6%
2001	27%	33%	32%	5%	3%
2002	28%	33%	33%	3%	3%
2003	24%	38%	31%	4%	3%
2004	30%	35%	28%	3%	4%
2005	23%	36%	33%	4%	4%
2006	23%	36%	33%	3%	4%
Independents only: Do you think of yourself as closer to the Republican or Democratic Party?	Closer to Republican	Closer to Democrat	Just Indep't		DK/ Refused
1999	33%	29%	34%		4%
2000	35%	25%	35%		5%
2001	29%	36%	31%		4%
2002	30%	32%	33%		4%
2003	33%	34%	33%		2%
2004	39%	31%	30%		0%
2005	30%	35%	32%		4%
2006	33%	34%	30%		2%
How would you describe your views on most political matters? Generally, do you think of yourself as a liberal, moderate, or conservative?	Liberal	Moderate	Conserv'e		DK/ Refused
1999	14%	38%	38%		10%
2000	16%	36%	39%		9%
2001	17%	39%	38%		6%
2002	15%	39%	41%		5%
2003	17%	36%	39%		7%
2004	17%	35%	42%		7%
2005	13%	40%	39%		8%
2006	16%	39%	39%		7%

Life in Arkansas

Overall, do you feel that Arkansas is generally headed in the right direction or the wrong direction?	Right	Wrong		DK/ Refused
1999	73%	15%		12%
2001	78%	14%		8%
2002	69%	22%		9%
2003	63%	26%		11%
2004	71%	18%		11%
2005	73%	18%		9%
2006	71%	20%		9%
Would you say you are better off financially, worse off, or about the same compared to a year ago?	Better	About the Same	Worse	DK/ Refused
1999	37%	47%	16%	1%
2001	41%	39%	19%	1%
2002	33%	39%	27%	1%

	2003	27%	45%	28%	1%
	2004	30%	46%	23%	1%
	2005	28%	49%	22%	1%
	2006	28%	51%	20%	1%
And, looking ahead, do you think a year from now, you will be ... as now?		Better	About the Same	Worse	DK/Refused
	1999	43%	46%	6%	1%
	2001	41%	39%	19%	1%
	2002	40%	45%	10%	5%
	2003	35%	49%	12%	5%
	2004	38%	46%	11%	5%
	2005	34%	46%	15%	5%
	2006	34%	53%	10%	2%

Methodology and Sample Information

Between October 8th and October 17th, the Survey Research Center at the University of Arkansas completed 761 surveys among a random sample of adult Arkansans³. Employing guidelines established by the American Association for Public Opinion Research, the poll's cooperation rate was 38%. This figure reflects completed surveys as a percentage of all eligible individuals contacted. The survey's margin of error is +/- 3.5 percentage points, meaning that we are 95 percent confident that the actual result lies within 3.5 percentage points (in either direction) of the result our sample produced.

To assess the representativeness of the sample drawn for the poll, the Arkansas Poll team opts to publish what most polling organizations do not: a comparison of survey respondents' key demographic characteristics to those of the state as a whole. This information is reported in the table below.

	2006 Arkansas Poll Sample	State of Arkansas
Median Age Category (for 18+ pop.)	45-54 years of age	35-44 years of age
Average # persons per household	2.4	2.5
Marital Status	58% married	58% married
Gender	40% male	49% male
Educational Attainment		
high school graduates	91%	76%
college graduates	31%	17%
Median household income	\$35,001-\$50,000	\$32,182
Race/Ethnicity		
White	83.7%	80.0%
Black or African American	9.2%	15.7%
Multi-Ethnic	1.6%	1.3%
Hispanic	1.8%	3.2% ⁴
Native American	2.1%	0.7%
Asian	0.3%	0.8%
Something Else, Don't Know, Refused	1.4%	0.0%

Source: All data from the Arkansas Poll or the U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census 2000.

³ Eight, or 1%, of the 761 interviews were conducted in Spanish.

⁴ Hispanics may be of any race, so these identifiers also are included in applicable race categories.