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# The Arkansas Poll, 2011 Summary Report

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\*Values in parentheses include the 599 “very likely voters” only; may not total 100 due to rounding.

### Most Important Problem

What is the most important problem or issue facing people in Arkansas today? <sup>1</sup>	2009	2010	2011 <sup>2</sup>
• the economy	39%	52%	67 (70)%
• education	6%	13%	5 (4)%
• healthcare	16%	14%	3 (3)%
• drugs	1%	8%	3 (3)%
• taxes	5%	7%	3 (2)%
• immigration	1%	8%	2 (2)%
• other/don't know/refused	30%	3%	17 (17)%

### Public Figure Approval Ratings

Do you approve or disapprove of the way _____ is handling his job as governor?		Approve	Disapprove	DK/Ref
Mike Huckabee	1999	66%	13%	21%
	2001	70%	17%	13%
	2003	47%	38%	16%
	2005	58%	27%	15%
Mike Beebe	2007	70%	9%	21%
	2008	74%	9%	18%
	2009	70%	9%	20%
	2010	70 (74)%	14 (14)%	16 (12)%
	2011	72 (74)%	13 (14)%	15 (12)%
Do you approve of _____ as a U.S. Senator?				
Blanche Lincoln	1999	46%	17%	37%
	2001	51%	13%	36%
	2003	55%	10%	35%
	2005	55%	17%	28%
	2007	50%	24%	26%
	2009	43%	34%	23%
John Boozman	2011	40 (44 )%	24 (26)%	36 (30)%
Do you ... Mark Pryor ... as a U.S. Senator?				
	2003	52%	11%	37%
	2005	56%	12%	32%
	2007	53%	18%	29%
	2009	51%	22%	27%
	2011	47 (48)%	27 (29)%	27 (21)%
Do you ... _____ ... as president?				
George W. Bush	2003	47%	46%	7%
	2005	38%	56%	7%
	2007	30%	65%	6%
Barack Obama	2009	42%	47%	10%
	2010	35 (31)%	57 (62)%	9 (7)%
	2011	32 (31)%	60 (64)%	8 (5)%
Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of Sec. of State Hillary Clinton?		Favorable	Unfavorable	DK/Ref
		67 (69 )%	26 (27)%	7 (5)%

<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> Values in parentheses include the "very likely voters" only; percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

Obama approval among....		<b>2011<sup>3</sup></b>
	Republicans/Democrats/Independents	9/60/28% (7/63/22%)
	Men/Women	29/35% (27/33%)
	Whites/Blacks	27/83% (26/87%)
	Personal financial situation: worse/same/better than last year	27/34/36% (26/31/33%)
	Household income of \$50,000 or less/\$50,001 or more	35/27% (34/26%)

### Bond Election

The ballot measure would authorize the state to renew up to 575 million dollars in bonds to continue supporting improvements to interstate highways in Arkansas; the program relies on revenue from existing fuel taxes. Given this description....	<b>All (very likely voters only)</b>
• favor the measure	63 (65)%
• oppose the measure	28 (26)%
• don't know/refused	9 (9)%

### Current Issues

During the next year, how much do you want the American public to do to help the natural environment?		
	A great deal	37 (35)%
	A lot	17 (16)%
	A moderate amount	29 (31)%
	A little	8 (9)%
	Nothing	6 (8)%
	Don't know/Refused	2 (2)%
And, so far, have the changes in the healthcare system led to better health care for you, worse health care for you, or are things about the same?		
	Better	8 (8)%
	Worse	24 (26)%
	About the same	64 (63)%
	Don't know/Refused	4 (3)%

Do you think global warming/climate change is an urgent problem requiring immediate attention or a longer-term problem that requires more study before government action is taken?		
• Urgent problem		
	2007	44%
	2009	34%
	2011	31 (30)%
• Longer-term problem		
	2007	44%
	2009	46%
	2011	49 (50)%
• Not a problem (only if volunteered)		
	2007	5%
	2009	10%
	2011	10 (13)%
• Unsure/Don't Know/Refused		
	2007	7%
	2009	9%
	2011	8 (8)%

<sup>3</sup> Values in parentheses include the 599 "very likely voters" only; percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

Which of the following policy positions most closely resembles your own view regarding relationships between two people of the same sex? <sup>4</sup>		
• Gay couples should be allowed to legally marry		
	2005	15%
	2007	16%
	2009	18%
	2011	23 (22)%
• Gay couples should be allowed to form civil unions or domestic partnerships, but not marry		
	2005	22%
	2007	27%
	2009	22%
	2011	20 (22)%
• There should be no legal recognition of a gay couple's relationship		
	2005	54%
	2007	51%
	2009	54%
	2011	50 (51)%
• don't know/refused		
	2005	9%
	2007	6%
	2009	6%
	2011	7 (6)%
And which comes closest to your view about what government policy should be regarding undocumented immigrants currently residing in the United States. Should the government:		
• allow them to remain in the United States to work for a limited amount of time?		
	2009	9%
	2011	8 (8)%
• allow them to become U.S. citizens if they meet certain criteria like learning English and paying their back-taxes?		
	2009	57%
	2011	56 (57)%
• deport all?		
	2009	27%
	2011	27 (28)%
• allow them to become permanent residents with no requirements?		
	2009	2%
	2011	3 (2)%
• don't know/refused		
	2009	5%
	2011	6 (6)%

### Female Politicians

	Agree	Disagree	DK/Ref
Male politicians are typically better at handling most political issues.	24 (23)%	71 (74)%	5 (4)%
Female politicians often let ... emotions influence their political decisions.	31 (29)%	62 (65)%	7 (6)%
I have some reservations about electing a female to the presidency.	31 (29)%	64 (67)%	5 (4)%
Female politicians lack expertise to deal with foreign policy issues/wars.	21 (21)%	73 (74)%	5 (5)%
Male politicians are generally better communicators ....	27 (24)%	68 (71)%	6 (5)%

<sup>4</sup> Values in parentheses include the 599 "very likely voters" only; percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

### Political Knowledge

	Correct
Do you happen to know the name of the current Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives?	17 (18)%
Which political party has the most members in the US House of Representatives?	54 (67)%
Of the nine members currently serving on the U.S. Supreme Court, do you happen to know how many are women?	21 (25)%
What party has the most members in the Arkansas State House of Representatives?	43 (49)%
Who is the current governor of Arkansas?	84 (87)%
How many years is the term of office for Arkansas's Governor?	61 (72)%

### 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 <sup>5</sup>
1999	23%	35%	31%	4%	7%
2000	23 (25)%	36 (38)%	35 (34)%	0%	6 (2)%
2001	27%	33%	32%	5%	3%
2002	28 (30)%	33 (35)%	33 (31)%	3 (2)%	3 (2)%
2003	24%	38%	31%	4%	3%
2004	30 (32)%	35 (36)%	28 (27)%	3 (3)%	4 (2)%
2005	23%	36%	33%	4%	4%
2006	23 (25)%	36 (37)%	33 (33)%	3 (3)%	4 (3)%
2007	24%	39%	30%	3%	2%
2008	24 (27)%	35 (34)%	33 (33)%	7 (5)%	2 (1)%
2009	24%	33%	34%	7%	3%
2010	21 (25)%	28 (27)%	42 (41)%	7 (6)%	3 (1)%
2011	26 (29)%	31 (33)%	34 (31)%	6 (5)%	4 (2)%
Independents only: Do you think of yourself ...?	Closer to Republican	Closer to Democrat	Just Indep't		DK/ Refused
1999	33%	29%	34%		4%
2000	35 (39)%	25 (26)%	35 (30)%		5 (2)%
2001	29%	36%	31%		4%
2002	30 (31)%	32 (34)%	33 (33)%		4 (3)%
2003	33%	34%	33%		2%
2004	39 (41)%	31 (32)%	30 (26)%		0 (1)%
2005	30%	35%	32%		4%
2006	33 (35)%	34 (34)%	30 (23)%		2 (3)%
2007	34%	37%	29%		1%
2008	35 (38)%	30 (29)%	33 (31)%		3 (3)%
2009	39%	32%	27%		2%
2010	44 (50)%	21 (16)%	33 (33)%		2 (2)%
2011	42 (48)%	29 (28)%	26 (22)%		3 (2)%

<sup>5</sup> Values in parentheses include the 599 "very likely voters" only; percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

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%
2007	16%	37%	39%		6%
2008	14%	35%	43%		8%
2009	14%	37%	42%		7%
2010	14 (12)%	35 (36)%	44 (48)%		8 (4)%
2011	16 (16)%	34 (34)%	45 (47)%		5 (3)%

### Life in Arkansas

Overall, do you feel that Arkansas is generally headed in the right direction or the wrong direction?	Right	Wrong		DK/ Refused <sup>6</sup>
2003	63%	26%		11%
2005	73%	18%		9%
2007	69%	21%		8%
2008	71%	19%		10%
2009	72%	16%		12%
2010	67 (68)%	22 (21)%		11 (11)%
2011	74 (76)%	20 (19)%		7 (6)%
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
2003	27%	45%	28%	1%
2005	28%	49%	22%	1%
2007	30%	48%	20%	1%
2008	20%	38%	41%	1%
2009	22%	46%	31%	2%
2010	19 (18)%	46 (47)%	34 (35)%	1 (0)%
2011	19 (19)%	49 (49)%	31 (32)%	1 (1)%
And, looking ahead, do you think a year from now, you will be ... as now?	Better	About the Same	Worse	DK/ Refused
2003	35%	49%	12%	5%
2005	34%	46%	15%	5%
2007	38%	45%	12%	3%
2008	35%	39%	18%	8%
2009	32%	48%	17%	4%
2010	28 (25)%	46 (45)%	20 (23)%	7 (7)%
2011	25 (21)%	52 (56)%	18 (20)%	4 (4)%

<sup>6</sup> Values in parentheses include the 599 "very likely voters" only; percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

## Methodology and Sample Information

Between October 14<sup>th</sup> and October 19<sup>th</sup> Eastern Research Services completed 800 telephone surveys among a random sample of adult Arkansans.<sup>7</sup> Twenty percent of all respondents spoke with SRC interviewers via cell phone.

The survey's margin of error statewide 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. The margin of error for the 599 self-identified "very likely voters" is +/- 4 percentage points.

Employing guidelines established by the American Association for Public Opinion Research, the poll's overall cooperation rate was 39% (52% for landline calls and 20% for cell phone calls). This figure reflects completed surveys as a percentage of all eligible individuals contacted.

To assess the representativeness of the sample drawn for the poll, the Arkansas Poll team publishes 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.

	<b>2011 Arkansas Poll Sample</b>	<b>State of Arkansas</b>
Average Age Category (for 18+ pop.)	55-64 years of age	45-54
Marital Status	60% married	53%
Gender	44% male	49% male
Educational Attainment		
high school graduates	90%	81%
college graduates	35%	19%
Median household income	\$35,001-\$50,000	\$37,888
Race/Ethnicity		
White	81%	77%
Black or African American	8%	15
Multi-Ethnic	3%	2%
Hispanic	3%	6% <sup>8</sup>
Native American	2%	1%
Asian	0.3%	1%
Something Else, Don't Know, Refused	3%	3%

Source: All data from the 2011 Arkansas Poll, Current Population Survey, the American Community Survey 2009, the U.S. Bureau of the Census 2010, or the U.S. Bureau of the Census State and County QuickFacts 2010. Many thanks to Grant Hodges for his assistance in the preparation of this report.

<sup>7</sup> Fourteen, or 1.8%, of the interviews were conducted in Spanish.

<sup>8</sup> Hispanics may be of any race, so these respondents also are included in applicable race categories.