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The Arkansas Poll, 2012 Summary Report

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Arkansas Poll Website: <http://www.uark.edu/depts/plscinfo/partners/arkpoll.php>

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*Values in parentheses include the “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? ¹	2010	2011	2012
• the economy	52%	67 (70)% ²	47 (48)%
• healthcare	14%	3 (3)%	15 (15)%
• drugs	8%	3 (3)%	12 (11)%
• education	13%	5 (4)%	11 (12)%
• taxes	7%	3 (2)%	6 (5)%
• immigration	8%	2 (2)%	5 (6)%
• other/don't know/refused	3%	17 (17)%	5 (4)%

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)%
2012	71 (72)%	14 (15)%	15 (14)%
Do you approve of _____ as a U.S. Senator?			
Blanche Lincoln 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)%
2012	42 (45)%	17 (18)%	41 (35)%
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)%
2012	51 (53)%	20 (21)%	29 (26)%
Do you ... _____ ... as president?			
George W. Bush 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)%
2012	34 (31)%	59 (62)%	8 (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.

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

Suppose the election were held today. Who would you be more likely to vote for...?	Obama	Romney	Other/DK/Ref
	34 (31)%	53 (58)%	14 (11)%

Ballot Measures

Referred Amendment 1 would increase the statewide sales tax from 6 percent to 6.5 percent for the next 10 years in order to generate money for Arkansas highways and other road construction projects. The increase would not apply to groceries. Given this description, do you favor or oppose this measure?	All (very likely voters only)	
favor the measure	51 (53)%	
oppose the measure	44 (42)%	
don't know/refused	5 (4)%	
A second measure would legalize the medical use of marijuana in Arkansas for people with certain conditions. Medical marijuana would be made available through non-profit medical dispensaries regulated by the Department of Health. Given this description, do you favor or oppose this measure?	All (very likely voters only)	
favor the measure	44 (43)%	
oppose the measure	52 (53)%	
don't know/refused	5 (5)%	

Current Issues

As you may know, the health care law allows states to expand Medicaid to provide health insurance to more low income people, including uninsured adults whose incomes are below \$16,000 a year. The federal government will initially pay the entire cost of this expansion, and after several years, Arkansas will pay 10 percent and the federal government will pay 90 percent. Arkansas must decide whether to go ahead with this expansion. What do you think Arkansas should do? Should we...	
Keep Medicaid as it is today, with no new funding from the federal government and no change in who will be covered by the program	45 (47)%
Expand Medicaid to cover more low income uninsured people, with the federal government initially paying the entire cost of the expansion and Arkansas eventually paying 10 percent	43 (41)%
don't know/refused	12 (12)%
And, some have argued that people who come to Arkansas when they are young and who graduate from an Arkansas high school, but who are not legally in the United States, should have access to in-state tuition at the state's public colleges and universities. Do you approve or disapprove of allowing such individuals to pay in-state tuition, instead of the higher rate paid by non-Arkansans?	
Approve	33 (32)%
Disapprove	58 (60)%
Don't know/Refused	9 (8)%

Which of the following policy positions most closely resembles your own view regarding relationships between two people of the same sex? ³		
• Gay couples should be allowed to legally marry	2005	15%
	2007	16%
	2009	18%
	2011	23 (22)%
	2012	18 (16)%
	2012	18 (16)%
• Gay couples should be allowed to form civil unions or domestic partnerships, but not marry	2005	22%
	2007	27%
	2009	22%
	2011	20 (22)%
	2012	20(20)%
	2012	20(20)%
• There should be no legal recognition of a gay couple's relationship	2005	54%
	2007	51%
	2009	54%
	2011	50 (51)%
	2012	55 (57)%
	2012	55 (57)%
• don't know/refused	2005	9%
	2007	6%
	2009	6%
	2011	7 (6)%
	2012	9 (6)%
	2012	9 (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)%
	2012	8(7)%
	2012	8(7)%
• 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)%
	2012	55(57)%
	2012	55(57)%
• deport all?	2009	27%
	2011	27 (28)%
	2012	26 (25)%
	2012	26 (25)%
• allow them to become permanent residents with no requirements?	2009	2%
	2011	3 (2)%
	2012	3(3)%
	2012	3(3)%
• don't know/refused	2009	5%
	2011	6 (6)%
	2012	9 (8)%
	2012	9 (8)%

³ Values in parentheses include "very likely voters" only; percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

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 ⁴
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)%
2012	29 (32)%	31 (30)%	33 (32)%	3 (3)%	4 (3)%
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)%
2012	41 (46)%	26 (22)%	28 (27)%		6 (5)%
Do you think of yourself as ...?	Liberal	Moderate	Conserv'e		DK/Ref
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)%
2012	13 (12)%	32 (32)%	46 (51)%		9 (6)%

⁴ Values in parentheses include "very likely voters" only; percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

Life in Arkansas

Overall, do you feel that Arkansas is generally headed in the right direction or the wrong direction?	Right	Wrong		DK/ Refused ⁵
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)%
2012	73 (74)%	17 (17)%		10 (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
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)%
2012	23 (24)%	49 (50)%	27 (26)%	0 (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)%
2012	26 (27)%	48 (46)%	13 (13)%	13 (14)%

⁵ Values in parentheses include “very likely voters” only; percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

Methodology and Sample Information

Between October 9th and October 14th, Issues & Answers Network, Inc. completed 800 telephone surveys among a random sample of adult Arkansans. Twenty percent of all respondents interviewed (n=160) use their cell phones for all or most of their calls. Ten of the interviews were conducted in Spanish.

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 642 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 23% (25% for landline calls and 17% 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.

	2012 Arkansas Poll Sample	State of Arkansas
Average Age Category (for 18+ pop.)	55-64	45-54
Married	58%	51%
Gender		
Male	40%	49%
Female	60%	51%
Educational Attainment		
High school graduates	89%	84%
College graduates	34%	19%
Median Household Income	\$35,001-\$50,000	\$38,307
Race/Ethnicity		
White	86%	77%
Black or African American	9%	15%
Multi-Ethnic	2%	2%
Hispanic	1%	6%*
Native American	1%	1%
Asian	<1%	1%
Something Else, Don't Know, Refused	2%	-

Sources: The 2012 Arkansas Poll, 2011 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau 2010 Census.

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