

Poll Results

Poll produced by the Government Department and the Texas Politics project at the University of Texas at Austin. For more information, contact Dr. Daron Shaw (dshaw@austin.utexas.edu) or Dr. James Henson (j.henson@austin.utexas.edu). More information, including graphics, crosstabs, and methodology, can be found at <http://texaspolitics.laits.utexas.edu>.

Summer 2008
N=800 Adults
July 18-30, 2008

Q1. Are you registered to vote in the state of Texas?

84% Yes, registered.
14% No, not registered.
2% Don't know/Refused/NA.

Q2. Generally speaking, would you say that you are extremely interested in politics and public affairs, somewhat interested, not very interested, or not at all interested?

42% Extremely interested.
43% Somewhat interested.
10% Not very interested.
5% Not at all interested.
* Don't know/Refused/NA.
(* : less than 1%)

Q3. There are many elections in the state of Texas. Furthermore, many people intend to vote in a given election, but sometimes personal and professional circumstances keep them from the polls. Thinking back over the past two or three years, would you say that you voted in all elections, almost all, about half, one or two, or none at all?

21% Every election.
30% Almost every election.
12% About half.
13% One or two.
23% None.
1% Don't know/Refused/NA

Q4. How closely have you been following the presidential campaign?

44% Extremely closely
41% Somewhat closely
12% Not that closely
3% Not at all
* Don't know/Refused/NA

Q5. Thinking about the country, do you think things are moving in the right direction or are we off on the wrong track?

- 20% Right direction.
- 67% Wrong track.
- 13% Don't know/Refused/NA.

Q6. What do you think is the most important issue facing the country today? [OPEN-ENDED]

- 41% Economy
- 17% Gas Prices/Oil Dependence/Energy
- 8% War in Iraq
- 7% Immigration
- 6% National Security/Terrorism
- 3% Health Care
- 3% Social Issues (including abortion, gay marriage, societal moral decline, etc.)
- 2% Problems with American Political System (i.e. corruption, incompetence, etc.)
- 2% President/Presidential Election
- 1% Fiscal Issues
- 9% Miscellaneous
- 2% Don't Know/NA

Q7. What do you think is the most important issue facing the state of Texas today? [OPEN-ENDED]

- 25% Economy
- 23% Immigration/Border Security
- 16% Gas Prices/Oil Dependence/Energy
- 5% Health Care
- 5% Education
- 2% Taxes (including property taxes)
- 1% Problems with Texas Political System (i.e. corruption, incompetence, etc.)
- 1% Social Issues (including abortion, gay marriage, societal moral decline, etc.)
- 1% Crime
- 1% Environment
- 10% Miscellaneous
- 8% Don't Know/NA

Q8. Compared to a year ago, do you think the country is better off, worse off, or about the same economically?

- 2% Better off.
- 81% Worse off.
- 15% About the same.
- 2% Don't know/Refused/NA.

Q9. What about you? Compared to a year ago, would you say that you are better off, worse off, or about the same economically?

17% Better off.
48% Worse off.
34% About the same.
1% Don't know/Refused/NA.

Q10. Looking ahead to the future, do you think your children will be better off than you are, worse off, or about the same economically? SeantoorRep

33% Better off.
28% Worse off.
14% About the same.
26% Don't know/Refused/NA.

Feeling Thermometer Scores

We'd like to get your feelings toward some political leaders and other people who are in the news these days. I'll read the name of a person and I'd like you to rate that person using something we call the feeling thermometer. A rating of 100 degrees means that you feel extremely favorable and warm toward the person. A rating of 0 degrees means that you feel extremely unfavorable and cold toward the person. You would rate the person at the 50 degree mark if you don't feel particularly warm or cold toward the person. If you haven't heard enough about the person, please feel free to say so. How do you feel about...

Q11. George W. Bush?

50.1% Negative (0-49)
2.4% Neutral (50)
47.5% Positive (51-100)

Average=44.9 (N=729)

Q12. John McCain?

37.1% Negative (0-49)
3.4% Neutral (50)
59.5% Positive (51-100)

Average=53.8 (N=734)

Q13. Barack Obama?

45.6% Negative (0-49)
2% Neutral (50)
52.4% Positive (51-100)

Average=50.3 (N=744)

Q14. Rick Perry?

38.7% Negative (0-49)
4.5% Neutral (50)
56.8% Positive (51-100)

Average=51.9 (N=722)

Q15. David Dewhurst?

15.1% Negative (0-49)
8.2% Neutral (50)
76.7% Positive (51-100)

Average=52.9 (N=432)

Q16. Kay Bailey Hutchison?

24.0% Negative (0-49)
4.5% Neutral (50)
71.5% Positive (51-100)

Average=60.8 (N=670)

Q17. John Cornyn?

20.3% Negative (0-49)
6.4% Neutral (50)
73.4% Positive (51-100)

Average=57.5 (N=558)

Q18. Tom Craddick?

18.6% Negative (0-49)
27.2% Neutral (50)
54.2% Positive (51-100)

Average=44.9 (N=397)

Horse Race Questions

Q19. If the 2008 general election were held today, for whom would you vote for president?

Among registered voters (N=668)

33% Democrat Barack Obama
43% Republican John McCain
2% Independent Ralph Nader
5% Libertarian Bob Barr
17% Don't Know

Q20. If the 2008 general election were held today, for whom would you vote for U.S. Senator?

Among registered voters (N=668)

31% Democrat Rick Noriega
44% Republican John Cornyn
25% Don't Know

State government approval/disapproval

Q19. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that Rick Perry is handling his job as governor? Would that be strongly approve/disapprove or just somewhat?

14% Strongly approve
30% Somewhat approve
15% Somewhat disapprove
18% Strongly disapprove
22% Don't know/refused/NA

Q20. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that Tom Craddick is handling his job as Speaker of the Texas House of Representatives? Would that be strongly approve/disapprove or just somewhat?

2% Strongly approve
15% Somewhat approve
10% Somewhat disapprove
10% Strongly disapprove
63% Don't know/refused/NA

Q21. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that David Dewhurst is handling his job as Lieutenant Governor? Would that be strongly approve/disapprove or just somewhat?

7% Strongly approve
19% Somewhat approve
9% Somewhat disapprove
4% Strongly disapprove
60% Don't know/refused/NA

Q22. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the job that your state legislators are doing in Austin at this time? Would that be strongly approve/disapprove or just somewhat?

- 6% Strongly approve
- 25% Somewhat approve
- 24% Somewhat disapprove
- 14% Strongly disapprove
- 31% Don't know/refused/NA

Q23. In terms of who runs state government, which of the following options do you prefer?

- 30% A Republican governor and a Republican-controlled legislature
- 28% A Democratic governor and a Democrat-controlled legislature
- 12% Split control, with a Republican governor and Democrat-controlled legislature.
- 9% Split control, with a Democratic governor and Republican-controlled legislature.
- 21% Don't know/refused/NA

State and local government issues

Now, we are going to ask some questions concerning state and local government functions.

Q24. Would you say that the quality of K-12 public school education in Texas is:

- 4% Excellent
- 42% Good
- 38% Not very good
- 11% Terrible
- 5% Don't know/Refused/NA

Q25. Some people think the best way to improve the quality of K-12 public school education in Texas is to increase public funding so that we have more teachers and better facilities. Others say we are spending enough money, and that the best way to improve the public schools is to demand accountability. Which is closer to your view?

- 37% Increase funding.
- 56% Demand accountability.
- 7% Don't know/Refused/NA

Q26. What is your opinion concerning the amount of state revenue that should be used to make education at state colleges and universities more affordable for Texans?

- 57% It should be increased to make college education more affordable for *all Texans*.
- 14% It should be increased to make college education more affordable for *only the most needy Texans*
- 15% It should stay the same.
- 7% It should be decreased.
- 6% Don't know/Refused/NA

Q27. Some people believe that transportation issues are best addressed by government. Other people think that these issues can be best handled by relying on the private sector to provide transportation solutions. Which of these positions is closest to your own position?

- 36% Government
- 40% Private sector
- 25% Don't know/Refused/NA

Q28. Do you support or oppose changing current state law to require registered voters to present government-issued photo identification before they are permitted to vote?

- 52% Strongly support
- 18% Somewhat support
- 6% Somewhat oppose
- 13% Strongly oppose
- 11% Don't know/Refused/NA

Q29. As you may know, redistricting is the process in which the physical boundaries of voting districts are changed based on current Census figures. Would you favor or oppose a redistricting reform that requires an independent commission of citizens to set boundaries for voting districts, instead of the state legislature and governor drawing and enacting a new redistricting plan?

- 46% Favor
- 20% Oppose
- 35% Don't know

Q30. How much of the time do you think you can trust the state government in Austin to do what is right?

- 3% Just about always
- 32% Most of the time
- 51% Only some of the time
- 7% None of the time
- 7% Don't know/Refused/NA

Policy Views

Next, we are going to ask a series of general questions about your opinion on various policy issues at both the state and national level:

Q31. Do you believe that abortion should be:

- 29% generally available
- 15% more limited
- 35% illegal except in cases of rape/incest/to save the life of the mother
- 17% never permitted
- 5% Don't know/refused/NA

Q32. Do you support or oppose the death penalty for those convicted of violent crimes? Would that be strongly support/oppose or only somewhat?

- 56% Strongly support.
- 18% Somewhat support.
- 5% Somewhat oppose.
- 11% Strongly oppose.
- 9% Don't know/Refused/NA.

Q33. If you had to choose, what do you think should happen to most illegal immigrants who have lived and worked in the United States for at least two years?

- 49% They should be given a chance to keep their jobs and eventually apply for legal status.
- 43% They should be deported back to their native country
- 7% Don't know/Refused/NA.

Q34. How likely is it that a stable, democratic government will be established in Iraq?

- 9% Very likely
- 30% Somewhat likely
- 33% Not too likely
- 20% Not at all likely
- 8% Don't know

Q35. Which of the following options most closely resembles your opinion about what the U.S. should do in Iraq?

- 27% Immediately begin a complete withdrawal of troops from Iraq.
- 38% Begin a gradual withdrawal of troops, leaving some forces behind until Iraq becomes more stable.
- 16% Maintain current troop levels in Iraq until the country is stabilized
- 8% Maintain current troop levels in Iraq until democracy is well established.
- 5% Increase troop levels in Iraq until the country is stabilized.
- 7% Don't know/Refused/NA.

Demos

Finally, a few final questions for statistical purposes...

AGE. *In what year were you born?*

_____ (1910-1988).

- 19% 18-29
- 31% 30-44
- 21% 45-54
- 16% 55-64
- 12% 65+

COUNTY. In which county do you reside?

LOCATE. Would you say you live in an urban, suburban, or rural area?

31% Urban.
46% Suburban.
23% Rural.

MARRIED. What is your current marital status?

58% Married
18% Single, never married
10% Divorced
8% Domestic Partnership
3% Widowed
2% Separated
1% Prefer Not To Say

CHILD. Do you have children? Do any currently live with you?

43% Children at home.
25% Children, not at home.
31% No children.
* Don't know/Refused/NA.

INCOME. What was your total household income for 2006?

3% Less than \$10K.
4% \$10K-15K
5% \$15K-\$19K
7% \$20K-\$25K
7% \$25K-\$30K
13% \$30K-\$40K
8% \$40K-\$50K
9% \$50K-\$60K
8% \$70K-\$80K
9% \$80K-\$100K
5% \$100K-\$120K
3% \$120K-\$150K
3% >\$150K
10% Prefer Not To Say

EDOFR. What is the highest level of education you completed?

7% Less than high school.
42% High school.
24% Some college.

- 15% College degree.
- 8% Post-graduate degree (MA, LLD, PhD).
- * Don't know/Refused/NA.

RELIGION. What is your religious denomination?

- 20% Baptist.
- 1% Episcopalian/ Anglican/ Church of England
- 2% Lutheran
- 4% Methodist
- * Reformed
- * Evangelical United Brethren
- 5% Protestant. (non-specific)
- 19% Christian (non-specific)
- * Christian Scientist
- * Church of God
- 3% Church of Christ
- 1% Assembly of God
- * Holiness
- 2% Pentecostal
- * Mormon
- 1% Latter Day Saints
- * Jehovah's Witnesses
- * Unitarian/Universalist
- * Buddhist
- * Muslim/Islam
- 23% Catholic
- * Jewish.
- 5% Agnostic
- 3% Atheist.
- 5% Don't know/Refused/NA

ATTEND. How often do you attend church or religious services?

(not asked of people who responded "Agnostic", "Atheist", of "Don't know/Refused/NA" to previous question)

- 13% More than once a week.
- 20% Once a week.
- 12% A few times a month.
- 24% Once or twice a year.
- 17% Never.
- 5% Don't know/Refused/NA.

OCCUPY. Thinking about your current employment status, would you say that you are...

21%	Professional.
16%	White collar.
16%	Blue collar.
*	Farmer/Rancher.
6%	Student.
16%	Retired.
12%	Homemaker.
*	Military.
9%	Not currently employed.
3%	Don't know/Refused/NA.

HISP. Do you consider yourself to be Hispanic or Latino?

35%	Hispanic.
65%	Non-Hispanic.
*	Don't know/Refused/NA.

RACE. Would you say that you are...

52%	White.
11%	African American.
31%	Hispanic.
1%	Asian/Pacific Islander.
1%	Native American.
3%	Multi-racial.
1%	Don't know/Refused/NA.

LIBCON. Generally speaking, would you say that you are...

20%	Liberal.
41%	Moderate.
39%	Conservative.

LIBER. Would you say you are a Libertarian?

12%	Yes
64%	No
24%	Not sure

PID (7-point scale)

23%	Strong Democrat
12%	Not Very Strong Democrat
6%	Independent, Lean Democrat
7%	Independent
8%	Independent, Lean Republican
12%	Not Very Strong Republican
18%	Strong Republican
4%	Other
9%	Not Sure

GENDER

49%	Male
51%	Female

Thank you very much. We really appreciate your time this evening!