



The Texas Lyceum Poll

Summary of Findings

Our third statewide poll on politics and policy finds Texans concerned about the national economy and their retirement prospects, but relatively confident about the state economy and in most cases, about their immediate personal financial situations.

They're open to allowing civil unions and/or same-sex marriages; in favor – across party lines – of requiring people to show photo identification before being allowed to vote; split on using tax money to pay for stem cell research; and while they generally support federal efforts to deal with the economy, most agree with the state's decision not to take federal stimulus money to bolster the unemployment insurance program.

Employment and the economy are foremost in their minds, and they believe the worst is still ahead. They remain optimistic about their children's prospects, and they're willing to give the federal government more time before making a final judgment regarding the success of federal efforts to fix the economy.

General Information

We interviewed Texas adults during the June 5-12 period, talking to 860 adults, 51% female, and 49% male. Three out of four said they are registered voters.

One third are "extremely interested" in politics and public affairs and another 46% are "somewhat interested." Almost half – 49% – said they vote in "every" or "almost every" election. Another 24 percent said they haven't voted in any election "over the last two or three years."

About a third of the respondents (32%) are identified as Hispanic, 11% as African American, and 54% as White. Catholics were more prevalent, at 27 percent, than

any other specific religious denomination, followed by Baptists (15 percent), and Christians who didn't identify with a particular denomination (12 percent).

Only 26 percent said they live in rural areas. Two-thirds are married. More than half (58%) have annual family incomes of \$75,000 or less, and 54 percent said they don't have a college degree (45% had at least an undergraduate degree).

More respondents (46%) identified themselves as Independents than as Republicans (25%) or Democrats (28%). More of those who don't identify with a party said they lean Republican (29%) than lean Democrat (22%). Asked about their political outlook, more consider themselves Conservative (46%) than as Moderate (35%) or Liberal (19%).

About the same number of those polled said they are "certain" or "likely" to vote in each party's primary (Republicans, 31%; Democrats, 30%), and another 17 percent said they intend to vote in a primary but haven't yet decided which one.

The Country and the Economy

Texans are split on the overall direction of things, with 48% saying the U.S. is moving in the right direction and 45% saying the country is on the wrong track.

They overwhelmingly agree that the economy and unemployment are the most important issue facing the country (62%), with health care, at 12%, far behind. The most important issues facing the state? Economy/Unemployment (35%), Immigration/Border Control/Illegal Immigrants (13%), and Health Care/Vaccination (8%).

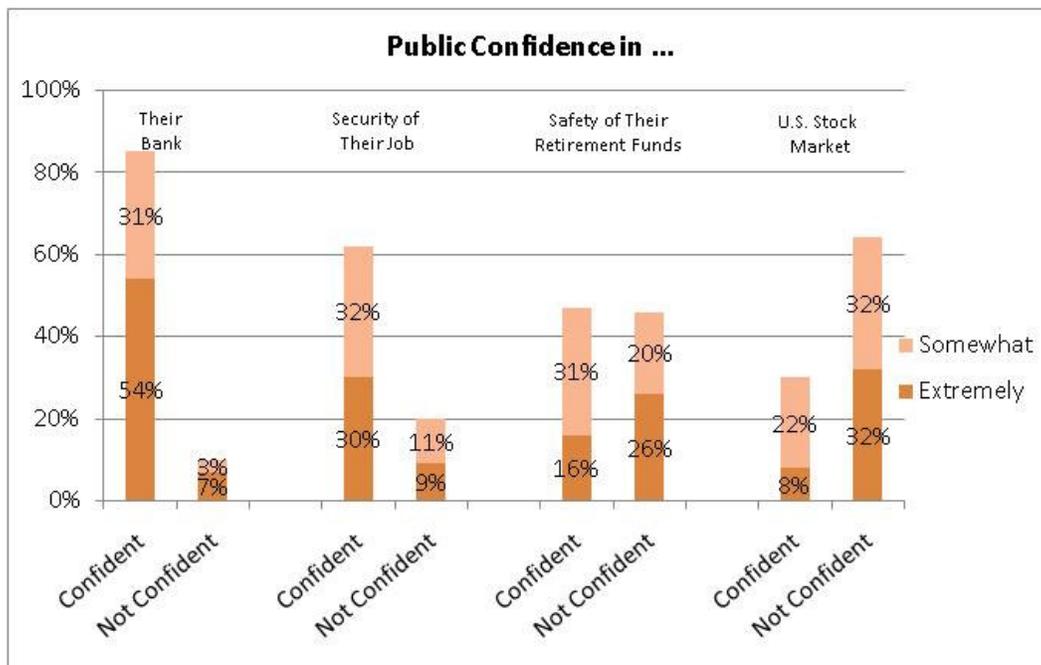
They believe the country is worse off than a year ago (58%), and put Unemployment and Jobs at the top of the economic issues in Texas (41%) in general, and for themselves and their families in particular (27%). Even so, many Texans say they are personally in about the same shape they were in a year ago (46%) or in better shape (17%) economically. For more than a third, however, the economic situation has worsened over the year. Two in five Texans think their children will be better off than they are and another 18% think their kids will be about the same economically.

Texans are pessimistic about the immediate prospects for the national economy, with 53% saying the worst is yet to come. Almost two-thirds believe the Texas economy is healthier than the national economy, and only 8% think things are worse here than in the rest of the country.

Personal Finances

They're relatively confident about their own situations, but worry about the financial markets and how they're personally affected. More than three-quarters are "very" or "somewhat" confident they can make their mortgage or rent payments and 85% are confident in the stability of their banks. Three in five believe their jobs are secure. But Texans are split when asked about the safety of their retirement funds, and almost two-thirds are "not very" or "not at all" confident about investing in the stock market.

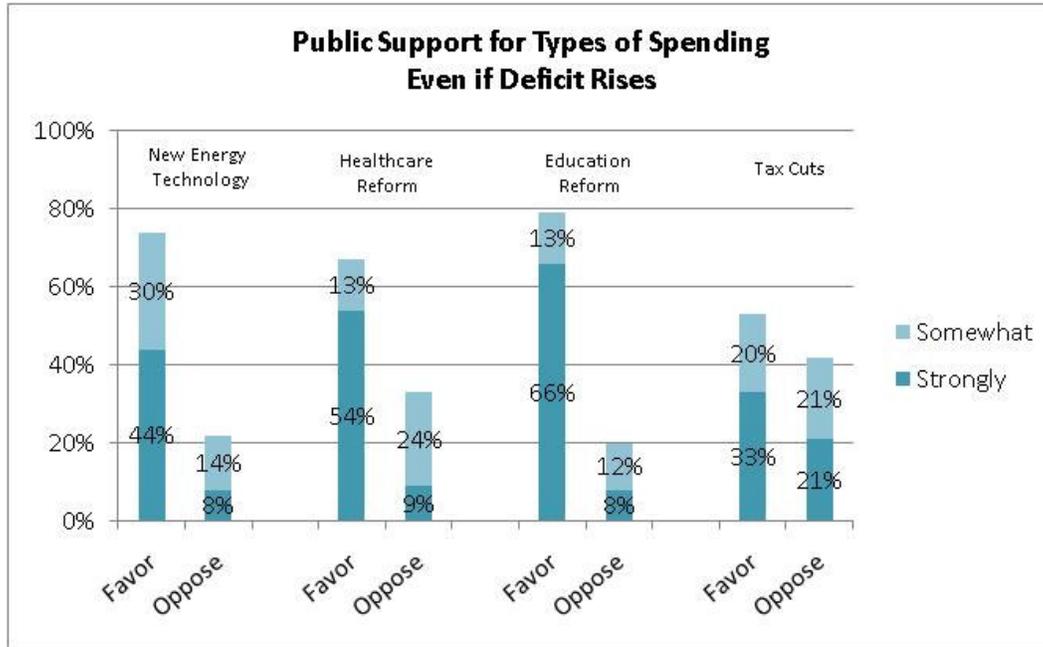
Nearly a third have stopped putting money in their retirement accounts in the last 12 months, but almost as many have started new retirement accounts in the same period, and one in five moved retirement money into less risky investments. About a fourth of respondents put off education or training for financial reasons and more than a third put off the purchase of a car. Smaller but significant numbers prematurely pulled money out of retirement accounts, put off their retirement dates, or put off selling their homes.



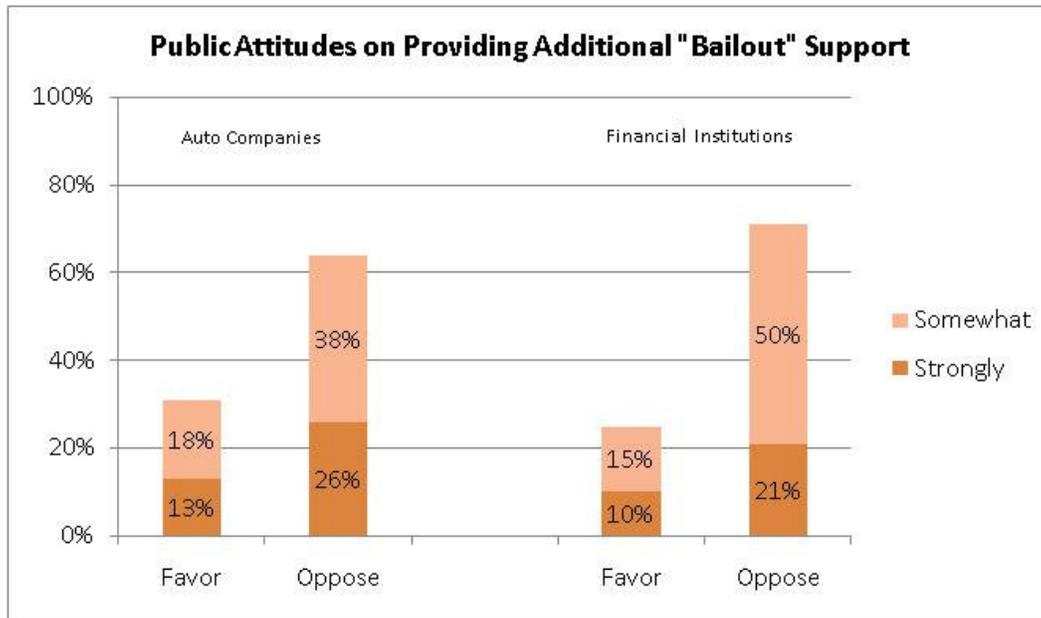
Government Response

By a two-to-one margin, Texans think the federal government will spend too much money (rather than too little) trying to boost the economy. But they're choosy about where they're willing and unwilling to spend. Three in five (62%)

would support higher spending on roads and infrastructure even if that would increase government deficits, but 71% oppose more spending to bail out financial institutions, and 64% oppose more spending to keep automakers from failure. Most (74%) favor more spending on energy technology, to make health care more affordable and accessible (67%), and to improve education systems (79%).



Slightly more than half would favor tax cuts even if those cuts lead to deficits. They're divided on whether to increase regulation of financial institutions. And almost two-thirds believe automakers should be allowed to succeed or fail without government intervention.

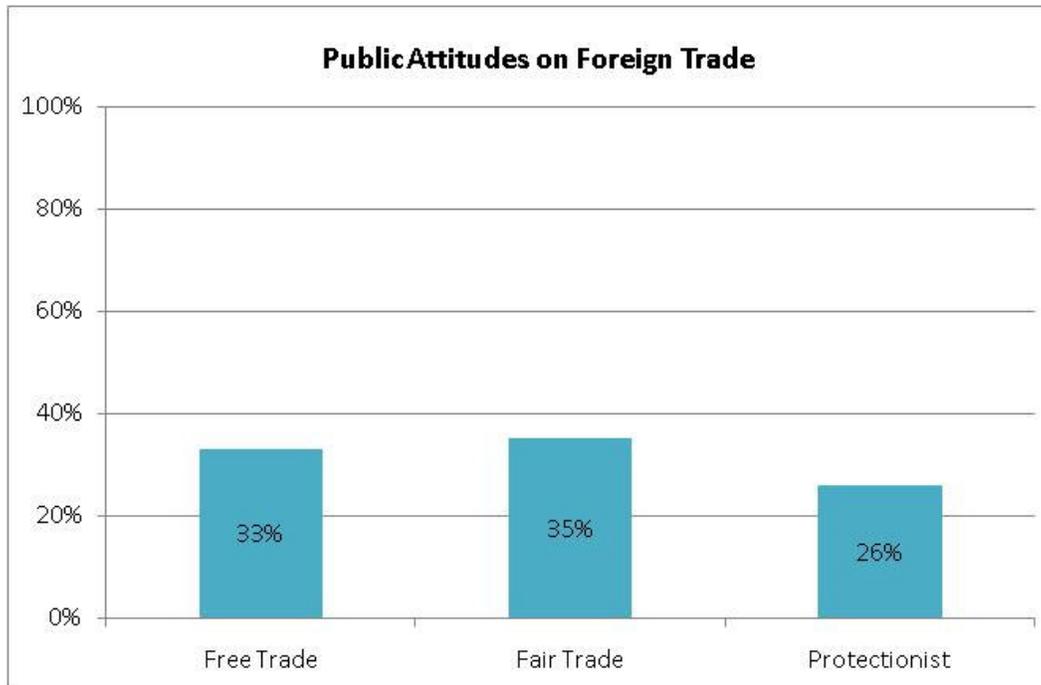


Texans are confident that the economic stimulus is helping to make the downturn less severe than it would otherwise be (58%), and most are willing to wait to decide whether the Obama Administration policies are working. Their patience varies: 24% will wait two or more years; 20% will wait two years; 29% will wait a year; and 23% said they're already out of patience.

Texas turned down \$556 million in unemployment insurance stimulus funds, and 58% of our respondents agree with Gov. Rick Perry that the money had too many strings attached. Another 34% thought the state did the wrong thing in turning down money to shore up that program.

Trade and Other Economic Issues

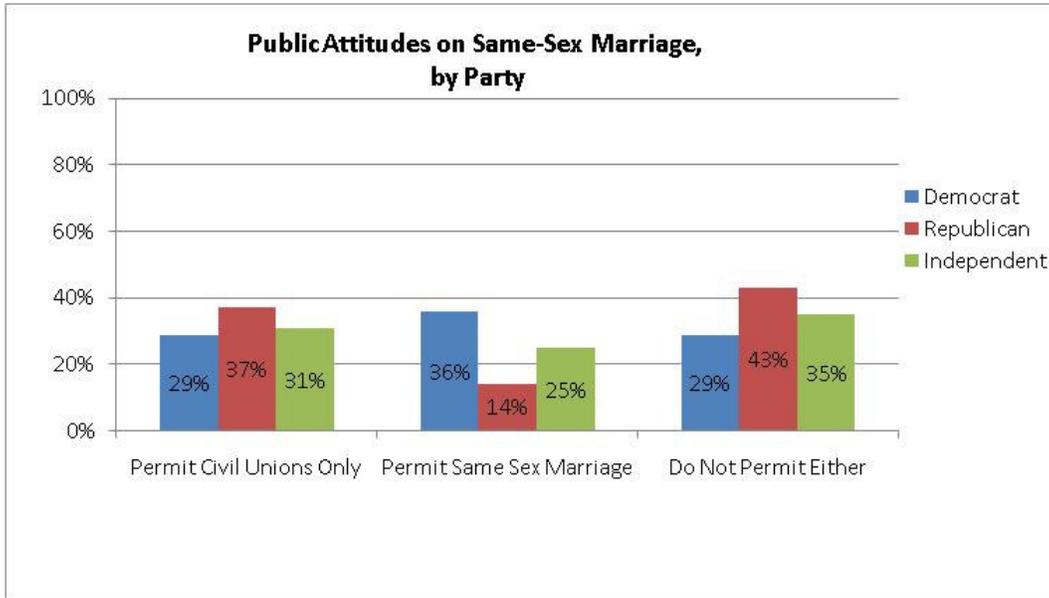
Self-described fair traders who want other countries to match U.S. rules and regulations (35%) outnumbered free traders who want no restrictions (33%) and protectionists who want to protect U.S. producers (26%) among the respondents. More think the North American Free Trade Agreement, or NAFTA, has been good for the state (43%) than bad (28%).



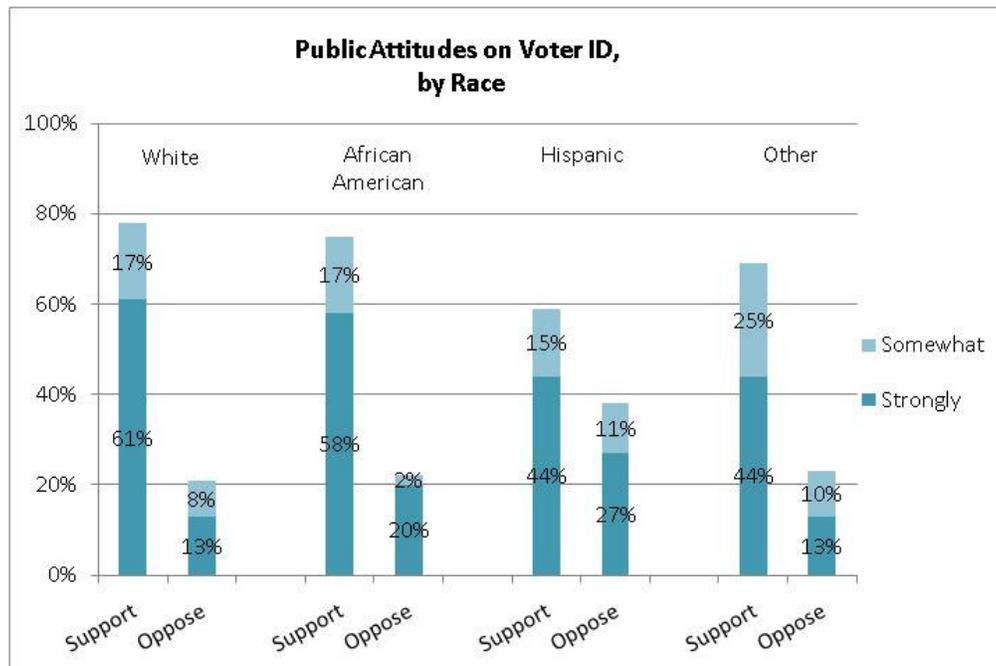
Texans narrowly favor "cap and trade" policies that would cap greenhouse gas emissions and then allow companies with lower greenhouse gas emissions to trade their permits to companies with higher emissions.

Couples, Voter ID, and Stem Cell Research

Most Texans don't oppose same-sex unions, but they're split in their support for marriage or civil unions. While more than a third (36%) oppose either arrangement, 32% said they would support civil unions and another 25% think same-sex marriages should be permitted. The poll found a distinct partisan difference, with civil unions as the preference of 29% of Democrats, 31% of Independents and 37% of Republicans; same-sex marriage the preferred alternative of 36% of Democrats, 25% of Independents, and 14% of Republicans. Allowing neither of those alternatives was the preference of 29% of Democrats, 35% of Independents, and 43% of Republicans.



The recent legislative session ended without any resolution of the Voter ID issue, which divided Republicans and Democrats in the Legislature. But voters support the idea (71%), and more than half of them "strongly" support it (54%). It's a winner across party lines, with support among Democrats (58%), Independents (68%), and Republicans (86%). Support for Voter ID is stronger among Anglos (78%) and African-Americans (75%) than with Hispanics (59%), but all of those groups support the idea. And only 2% of Texans are undecided on the issue.



Texans are evenly split over the use of state tax dollars to fund embryonic stem cell research, with 48% saying they would support that and 46% saying they would oppose it. The intensity of feeling on that issue was roughly even, with 27% "strongly" in support and 30% "strongly" in opposition.

Methodology

The 2009 Texas Lyceum Poll is a telephone-based multi-stage cluster sample of Texas adults. Telephone coverage within the state of Texas is approximately 97%. Randomized selection procedures were assiduously followed throughout the process, even at the level of selecting individuals within the household. The final sample size is 860 adult Texans. The instrument itself relies on questions that have been used previously in national polls, and have been shown to be both valid (correlating with plausible independent and dependent variables) and reliable (robust to question order and interviewer effects). A Spanish version of the instrument was developed and respondents were given a choice of participating in English or Spanish. Bilingual interviewers were utilized, and approximately 146 interviews (17% of the sample) were completed in Spanish. The overall response rate (completed interviews/contacts) is 38%. This rate is partially the result of an extended time in the field, which facilitated call-backs. The overall margin of error for the sample is +/- 3.34 percentage points at the 95% confidence level. The data used to generate top-lines and tables are weighted by U.S. Census Bureau estimates with respect to age, gender, and race. For example, Census data indicate the proportion of 18-29 year old Hispanic females in Texas, and we use these estimates to weight the survey data. As expected, the most significant weights are applied to young, male, minority respondents (who are under-represented here, as they are in almost all polls in the U.S.).

About the Texas Lyceum

The Texas Lyceum, a non-profit, non-partisan group, is a statewide leadership organization focused on identifying the next generation of top Texas leaders. The Lyceum consists of 96 men and women from throughout the state who begin their six-year terms while under the age of 46, and who have demonstrated leadership in their communities and professions, together with a deep commitment to Texas.

The Texas Lyceum acts as a catalyst to bring together diverse opinions and expertise to focus on national and state issues, and seeks to emphasize

constructive private sector, public sector, and individual responses to the issues.

To accomplish these purposes, the Lyceum conducts periodic public forums, publishes the Lyceum Journal, commissions The Texas Lyceum Poll, and convenes programs for its Directors to explore and discuss key economic and social issues of the state and nation.

For more information visit *www.TexasLyceum.org*.