



The Texas Lyceum

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2009 LYCEUM POLL TAPS INTO TEXANS' ATTITUDES
Concern over national economy grows by 58 percent in three years
Most agree with Governor Perry's call to reject stimulus funds for unemployed

Majority of Texans favor expanding rights to same sex couples, favor voter ID and are split on state-funded embryonic stem cell research

(AUSTIN) The Texas Lyceum's 3rd annual poll 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. After three years, the number of Texans who rank the economy as the most important issue facing the country has grown from 4 percent to 62 percent.

This is just one of several interesting findings in the poll, conducted by The Texas Lyceum, a non-partisan, non-profit statewide leadership organization. The poll surveyed roughly 1,000 Texans via telephone between June 5th and June 12th. The poll's margin of error is plus or minus six percent.

The 2009 Lyceum Poll asked a series of questions about the health of the economy in our state and nation, as well as Texans' faith in the future of their personal finances. These questions reveal a very pessimistic economic outlook.

- Q26: **more than two thirds** of Texans don't have confidence in the stock market.
- Q25: nearly half (**46 percent**) are not very confident about the safety of their retirement fund.

Other "hot" issues

Meanwhile, even though the nation's Bible Belt remains cinched across the Lone Star State, the poll also shows that a majority of Texans favor allowing same sex unions.

58 percent of respondents support expanding legal rights for same sex couples. When asked, “Recently there are some debates about what rights should be afforded to same sex couples. Which is closest to your opinion?” 33 percent of respondents reported favoring civil unions, while 25 percent supported same sex marriage. (Q 56)

“The 2009 Lyceum Poll demonstrates that while Texans do not support gay marriage per se, they are not necessarily opposed to expanded legal rights for same sex couples,” said **Dr. Daron Shaw of the University of Texas**, who, with Dr. James Henson, conducted the poll.

Other interesting results reflected public opinion on policy matters debated during the recently wrapped Texas Legislative session:

- An overwhelming majority of Texans, 70 percent, support voter ID legislation. “The Texas legislature recently considered legislation stating that people have to provide photo ID in order to vote in Texas elections. Supporters say such an ID check is required to purchase groceries or receive any government services, and is needed to guarantee the integrity of the electoral system. Opponents say that there is no evidence that unregistered people are voting in Texas and that a voter ID requirement would disproportionately discourage Hispanics and senior citizens, who are less likely to have ID, from voting. Do you support or oppose voter ID legislation?” (Q55)
- Texans appear to be evenly divided over state funding for embryonic stem cell research (Q54): 48 percent favor such funding, while 46 percent are opposed.

Texans are conflicted on using federal stimulus funds.

Respondents agreed that the economy and our growing unemployment rate is the number one concern facing the state and the nation.

However, 58 percent support Governor Perry’s recent call to reject federal stimulus dollars aimed at shoring up the state’s unemployment fund. (Q53)

“Texans are conflicted about taking money from the federal government. While they approve of the Governor’s rejection of federal stimulus dollars for the unemployed, more than 60 percent are confident that the President’s plan is helping our overall sagging economy,” said **Dr. James Henson, Director of the Texas Politics Project at the University of Texas at Austin**. “In addition, Texans favor more federal spending on healthcare, new energy technology and education.”

Respondents were asked if they favored or opposed additional federal spending, even if it means raising the federal deficit to achieve a series of stimulus package goals:

- Q40: **84 percent favor** additional spending to develop new energy technology.
- Q41: **76 percent favor, with 56 percent strongly favoring**, additional spending to make health care more accessible and affordable.
- Q42: **78 percent favor** additional spending to improve education systems.

However, while Texans think the worst has yet to come for the national economy, respondents view the Texas economy in a more positive light. (Q20, 21)

“We are proud to share the results of our third annual Texas Lyceum Poll with the media and the general public,” said **Lyceum President Jay Rutherford**. “In our third year of conducting this poll, our mission remains the same: to offer an independent, non-partisan survey that provides a clear and incisive look at the issues most important to Texans. We believe the Texas Lyceum Poll is a valuable tool in charting the course for policy decisions in our great state.”

About the Texas Lyceum

The Texas Lyceum, a non-profit, non-partisan group, is a premier 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 term while under the age of 46, and have demonstrated leadership in their community and profession, together with a deep commitment to Texas.

In 2009, the Lyceum conducted the third annual Texas Lyceum Poll, an independent survey of Texan’s attitudes about issues facing the state and the nation, and held its 24th Annual Public Conference in Austin entitled: “The 2009 Stimulus Package: What’s in it (or not) for Texas?”

The Lyceum has an impressive list of former members who are serving or have served in public office including: President George W. Bush, Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison, Governor Rick Perry, former Texas Comptroller John Sharp, Texas State Senators Rodney Ellis and Kirk Watson, Houston Mayor Bill White, Texas Supreme Court Justice Don Willett, former Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings, Congressman Pete Olson. Current Directors include Texas Representatives Veronica Gonzalez, Allen Vaught and Marc Veasey.

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 the Directors to explore and discuss key economic and social issues of the state and nation. For more information visit: <http://www.texaslyceum.org/>

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