

Maryland Policy Choices: 2004

Public Opinion and Policy Choices

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ABOUT THE SCHAEFER CENTER FOR PUBLIC POLICY

The Schaefer Center for Public Policy was established in 1985 with a mission to bring the University's academic expertise to bear in solving problems faced by government and nonprofit organizations. The Center offers five primary services: strategic planning, performance measurement, program evaluation and analysis, opinion research, and management training. It is through the Schaefer Center that the University of Baltimore and the College of Liberal Arts meet one of the central components of the University's mission of applied research and public service to the Baltimore Metropolitan Area and the state of Maryland.

As a state supported higher education institution in a major urban area, the University of Baltimore and the School of Public Affairs faculty place a great deal of emphasis on teaching, research, and public service. Faculty members in the School of Public Affairs (Schaefer Center for Public Policy) are expected to contribute to the scholarly literature in the field of public administration and to be involved in applied research activities.

The Schaefer Center is a public organization committed to serving its constituency - the public sector of the state of Maryland. The values we espouse in our training, consulting, educational, and other activities are the values we live by: quality and efficiency. The result of this commitment can be seen in the quality of our work. Over the past fifteen years, the Schaefer Center has been awarded well over 250 grants and contracts from various local, state, and federal agencies, as well as not-for-profit organizations. Our service commitment is also indicated in the pro bono work we complete. The Center's pro bono projects range from providing consulting services to nonprofit organizations, research and report writing on issues of interest to public officials, and conducting educational conferences.

Maryland Policy Choices: 2004

During the period from January 18 through February 11, 2004, the Schaefer Center for Public Policy at the University of Baltimore conducted a statewide public opinion survey on major issues public officials will likely be facing during the 2004 Legislative session. The survey elicited public perceptions on a number of topics: state priorities, the economy, the state budget, growth management, and education.

RANDOM TELEPHONE SURVEY. Surveyors telephoned and interviewed 826 randomly selected residents of the state of Maryland over the age of 21. Phone numbers were selected from computer generated lists of all possible phone numbers in Maryland. The margin of error for this survey is approximately +/- 4%.

PREVIOUS SURVEYS: Several items in the 2004 survey are repeated from previous surveys. Where appropriate, comparisons between 2003 and previous surveys are presented. Comparing the surveys is sometimes somewhat problematic as slightly different populations are used; caution is urged in comparing changes between years. The numbers of individuals surveyed in past surveys were usually around 800. In the 1993 and 1994 surveys, substantially more Marylanders were interviewed. These numbers were weighted so as to allow comparison.

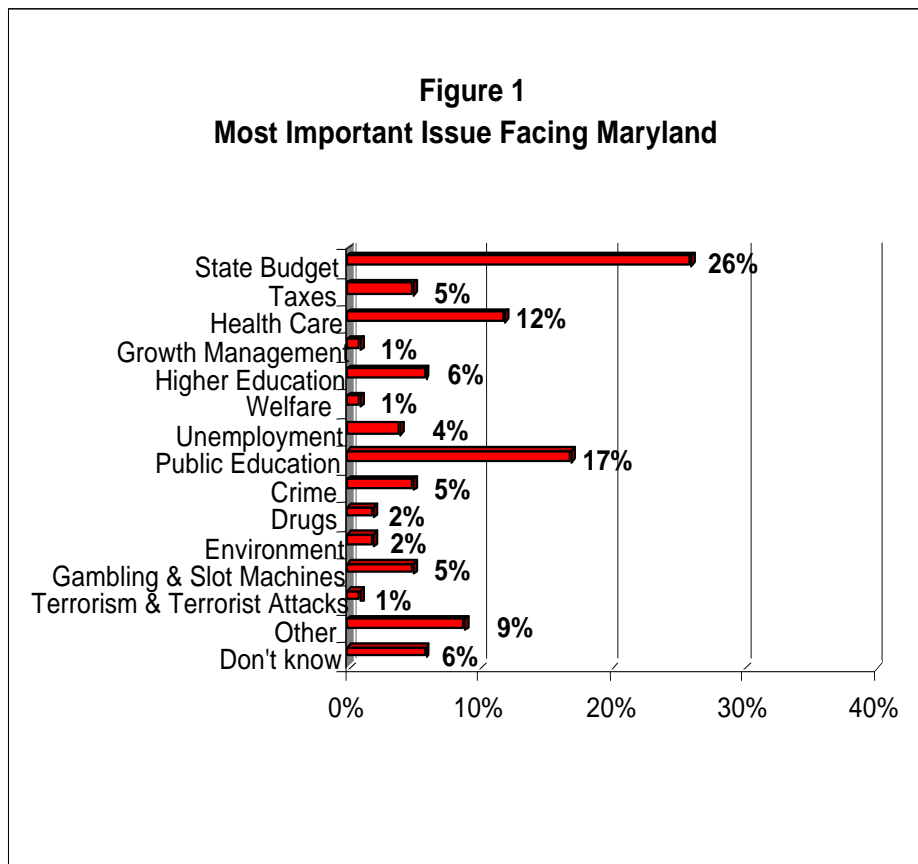
REPORTING CONVENTIONS USED IN THIS REPORT. To simplify reporting, survey results described in this document have been rounded to the nearest whole percentage. Unless otherwise specified, all percentages are based on an N of 826. In some cases, where missing data and refusals are presented, the figures reported will not sum to 100. In effect, this creates relatively more conservative interpretation of the data.

The survey was designed and implemented by the staff of the Schaefer Center for Public Policy of the School of Public Affairs at the University of Baltimore. Principals included Dr. Don Haynes, Director of Survey Research at the Schaefer Center, and Dr. Ann Cotten, Director of the Schaefer Center.

Section A: Maryland's Priorities

Question: What would you consider to be the most important problem facing the state government in the next year?

Respondents were asked to speak their minds by telling us what they consider to be the most significant issue facing Maryland state government. The question was asked without prompting, and respondents could say whatever was on their minds. Figure 1 shows what Marylanders believe are the most important issues facing the state.



“It’s the Economy” is a phrase heard constantly and Marylanders are no exception. Particularly, the state budget and the economy seem to be the issues that most Marylanders believe are the most critical issues facing state government. Some 26% of respondents mentioned the budget, while another 4% mentioned unemployment. If taxes (5%) are included then some 36% of all those queried mentioned economic or finance concerns as the most significant. Public education, an item that is strongly represented in questions of this nature, was mentioned by 17% of Marylanders surveyed. If higher education (6%)

is added to these results then 23% of Marylanders vocalized concerns with this issue. In addition, health care (12%) was another area of concern.

The remainder of respondents was concerned with a variety of other issues.

Following this question, respondents were asked a similar set of questions that allowed them to state whether they would like to increase spending, decrease spending, or apply no change in spending to the following priority areas.

Elementary and secondary schools
 State universities and colleges
 Parks and recreation
 Public assistance to the poor
 Arts and cultural activities
 Aid to local governments
 Aid to Baltimore City
 Public transportation
 Environmental protection

Police and public safety
 Prisons and corrections
 Roads and highways
 Programs for the elderly
 Prescription benefits for elderly
 Open space and parkland
 Protection against terrorist attacks
 Medical assistance to the poor

Responses to this question are shown in Figure 2.

Percentages reflect the number of respondents who said “very important” to each element of the list. The highest priorities for Marylanders this year are improving education (73% said very important) and prescription plans for the elderly (69%). Slightly lower on the priority list are medical assistance to the poor (64%) and police and public safety (55%). Receiving slightly lower rankings were programs for the elderly with 54% saying “very important”, public assistance to the poor (45%), and state universities and colleges (43%). Equally interesting are the items that appeared low in the rankings: public safety and corrections (26%) and open space and parkland (19%).

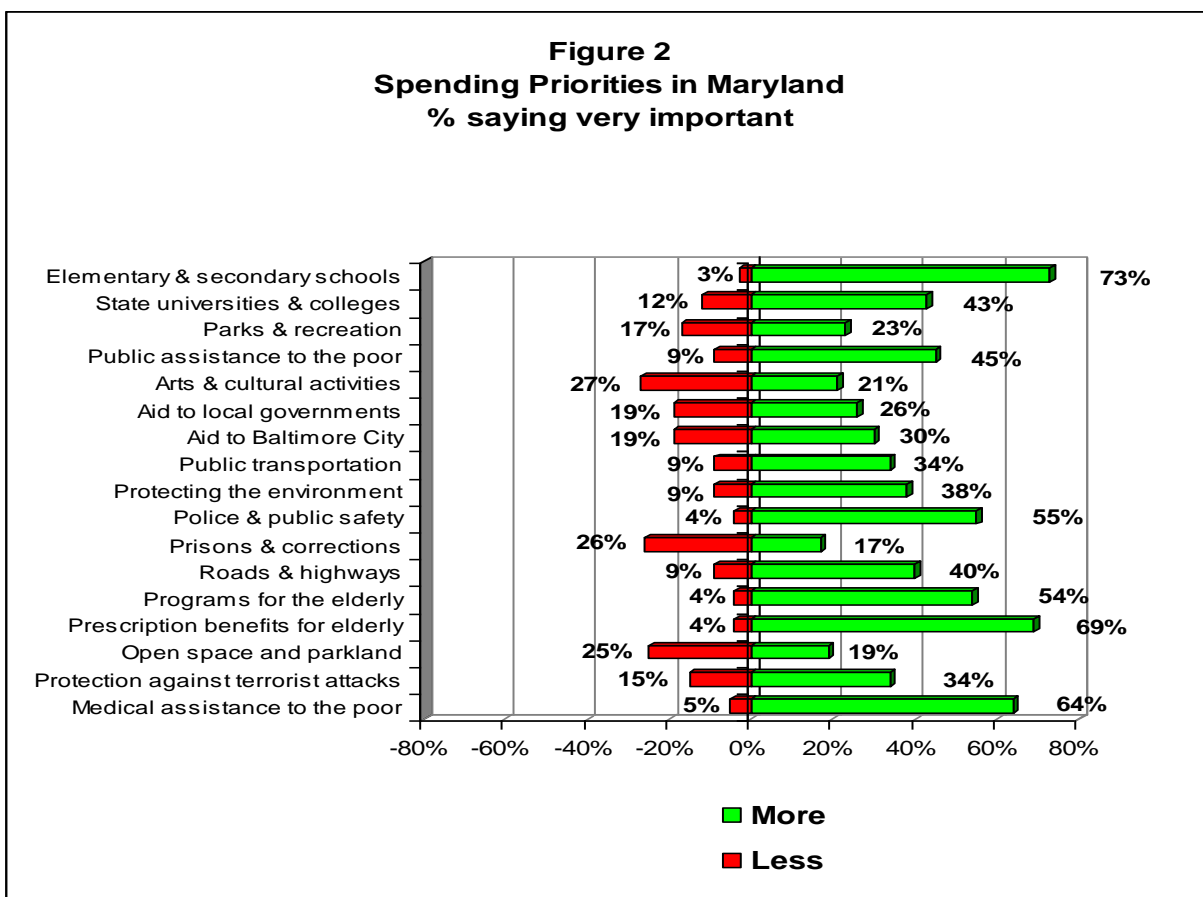


Table 1				
Maryland's Spending Priorities				
	Very Important	Important	Somewhat important	Not at all Important
Developing and keeping jobs	61%	31%	7%	2%
Avoiding tax increases	36%	30%	21%	12%
Preserving farm land	43%	33%	17%	6%
Improving public transportation	32%	34%	24%	9%
Attracting new businesses	42%	34%	16%	8%
Improving the environment	46%	35%	15%	3%
Lowering taxes	31%	34%	26%	18%
Improving police protection	46%	33%	16%	5%
Reinvesting in communities	40%	39%	19%	5%
Reducing size of government	20%	25%	27%	25%
Revitalizing downtowns	20%	33%	30%	15%
Discouraging sprawl	26%	29%	22%	17%
Buying open space/parkland	21%	26%	27%	24%
Improving education	70%	22%	6 %	1%
Building more or better roads	25%	37%	26%	12%

B: Perceptions of Economic Conditions in Maryland

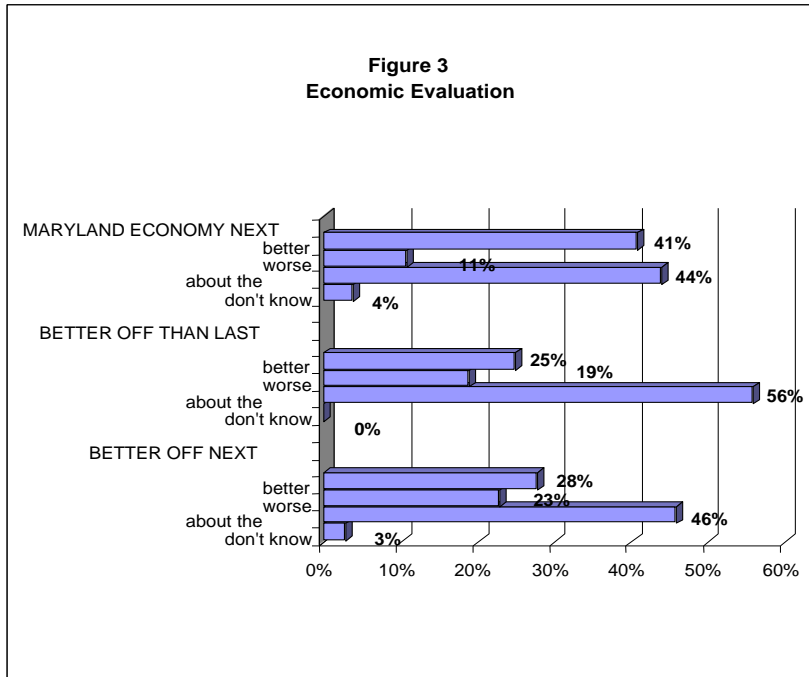
To gauge the extent of economic optimism or pessimism on the part of Marylanders, we asked a series of questions concerning respondents' perceptions of the future of the Maryland economy and their own economic fortunes.

Question: *In terms of the overall Maryland economy, do you think things in the next year will get better, will get worse, or do you think things will stay about the same?*

Question: *What about your personal economic situation, are you better off, are you worse off, or do you think you are about the same as you were last year?*

Question: *Again, thinking about your personal economic situation, do you think you will be better off, worse off, or do you think you will be about the same, a year from now?*

In terms of the Maryland economy, 28% said the Maryland economy would be better off next year and 46% said they thought it would be about the same. (See Figure 3) About 24% thought Maryland's economy would deteriorate. Six years ago (1998), results for the same questions were: 24% said "get better", 62% said "stay about the same", and 10% said "get worse". The numbers are slightly higher than last year where 19% said the Maryland economy would get worse.



In terms of personal economic fortunes, approximately 19% said they were "worse off" now. In 2002, 21% said they were "worse off" last year. However, 25%, compared to 46% last year, said they were "better off" now. In addition, about 56% of respondents said they were about the same.

One of the more important questions was "In terms of the overall Maryland economy, do you think things will get better,

will get worse, or do you think things will remain the same?" It is a closer measure of economic optimism or pessimism. The good news is that only about 11% of the respondents were truly pessimistic, stating that the overall economy would be worse off next year. This is about the same as last year. About 41% of those responding this year, felt they would be better off next year, while 44% said they would be, economically speaking, about the same next year. Again, these numbers are about the same as last year when 41% said they would be better off next year and 47% said they would be about the same. Overall, this appears to represent a slight weakening of economic optimism in Maryland.

C: Government Performance

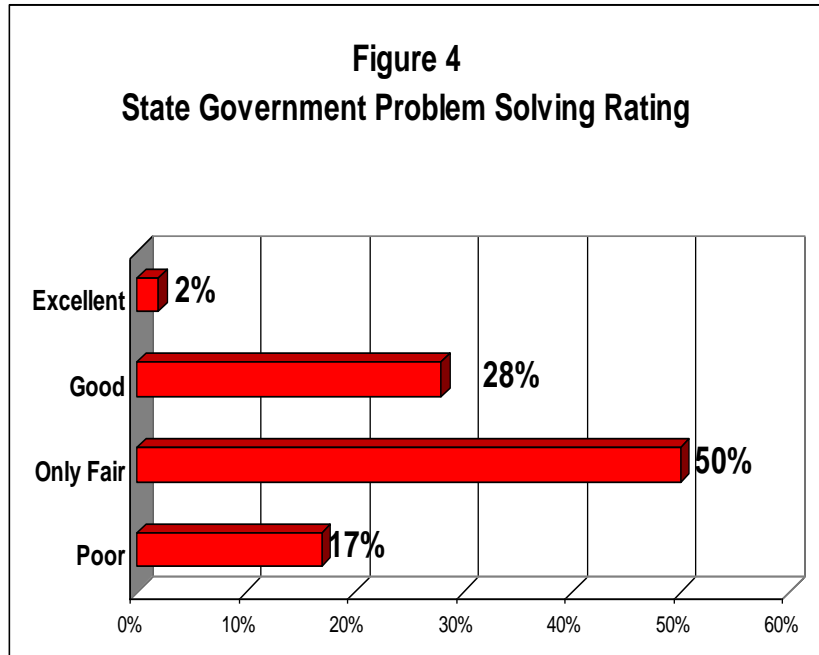
The survey also asked a series of questions concerning perceptions of state government performance.

Question: *In general, how would you rate the performance of state government in solving problems in Maryland? Would you say excellent, good, only fair, or poor?*

As in past years, Marylanders tended not to give very high marks to state government in solving Maryland's problems. (Figure 4) A large majority--some 78% of the respondents--rated the government's efforts as either "good" or "only fair." Seventeen percent (17%) say "poor" while only 2% say excellent. Evaluations decreased somewhat from last year

when only 11% said “poor” and 5% said “excellent”. These results are similar to those given government in 2002.

This year we asked: “How do you think the state should resolve the pending budget deficit? Should it cut programs, increase taxes, or a combination of both?” Fifty-seven percent (57%) of Marylanders said that the state should use a combination of both. There was a fairly even split between cutting programs and services (15%) and increasing taxes (14%).



Section B: Budgetary Priorities

Periodically, we ask questions about the government's spending priorities. For a list of services or budget area, respondents were asked if they thought government should spend more money, spend less money, or whether there should be no change in the amount of money spent. The introduction ended by reminding respondents that spending increases come out of tax money paid by them.

Question: *I'd like to ask some questions about the government's spending priorities. For each of these services funded by state or local government, tell me whether you think we should spend more money, spend less money, or whether there should be no change in the amount of money spent. Please keep in mind that spending increases come out of tax money paid by you.*

*Elementary and secondary schools
State universities and colleges
Parks and recreation
Public assistance to the poor
Arts and cultural activities
Aid to local governments
Aid to Baltimore City
Public transportation
Environmental protection*

*Police and public safety
Prisons and corrections
Roads and highways
Programs for the elderly
Prescription benefits for elderly
Open space and parkland
Protection against terrorist attacks
Medical assistance to the poor*

Table 2 shows the percentage of those who said “spend more”, “spend less”, “spend about the same”. Two things stand out immediately. First, very few people wanted to see cuts in any of the programs mentioned. In fact, for only three of the items – arts and cultural activities, prisons and corrections, and open space and parkland – do slightly

less than a quarter of those queried said “spend less”. Second, a large share of Marylanders wanted to see more money spent in a variety of areas. For elementary and secondary education, which always gets very high support in Maryland, some 73% said spend more. Majorities also wanted to spend more on police and public safety (55%), prescriptions for the elderly (69%), medical assistance to the poor (64%), and other programs for the elderly (54%). Forty percent (40%) said they felt government should spend more on public transportation and 38% felt that the government should spend more on environmental protection. Thirty-four percent (34%) felt that more should be spent on protection against terrorist attacks.

	Spend More	Spend Less	No Change
Elementary and secondary schools	73%	3%	22%
State universities and colleges	43%	12%	42%
Parks and recreation	23%	17%	59%
Public assistance to the poor	45%	9%	42%
Arts and cultural activities	21%	27%	50%
Aid to local governments	26%	19%	49%
Aid to Baltimore City	30%	19%	40%
Public transportation	34%	9%	52%
Environmental protection	38%	9%	50%
Police and public safety	55%	4%	39%
Prisons and corrections	17%	26%	51%
Roads and highways	40%	9%	49%
Programs for the elderly	54%	4%	39%
Prescription benefits for elderly	69%	4%	24%
Open space and parkland	19%	25%	53%
Protection against terrorist attacks	34%	15%	46%
Medical assistance to the poor	64%	5%	28%

When the categories of “spend more” and “spend about the same” (no change) are combined, it is clear that the Maryland public did not want to see budget cuts in any area. It will be difficult to cut programs in ways acceptable to the public.

Our next survey question was concerned with a number of new budgetary policies that are part of the discussions being held in Annapolis. We asked if respondents would strongly approve, approve, disapprove, or strongly disapprove of each.

Question: *There have been a number of proposals put forward about how to deal with the budget situation in Annapolis. I am going to read a few of these suggestions to you. For each, please tell me if you strongly approve, approve, disapprove, or strongly disapprove.*

Increase the amount of taxes corporations pay.
Increase the tax rate for individuals earning over \$100,000 a year.
Increase the sales tax from 5% to 6%.
Expand the sales tax to services such as accounting, legal, or beautician services
Allow counties to add a 6% tax to individual cell phone bills

Figure 5 shows the percentage of those who say “approve” or “strongly approve” for each suggestion. The remainder disapproved. Note the items for which a majority voiced support: increasing corporate taxes (75%) and increasing the tax rate for those making over \$100,000 per year (67%). All other items failed to get public support. This included items involving sales taxes, personal services taxes, or cell phone taxes that would require individuals to shoulder the tax burden. About 43% of respondents strongly approved or approved of a hike in the sales tax and inclusion of personal services in the general sales tax. Only 30% approved or strongly approved to allow counties to tax cell phone bills. The pattern of response here is typical of tax issues where the highest support for tax increases is for policies that shift the tax burden to other people or entities.

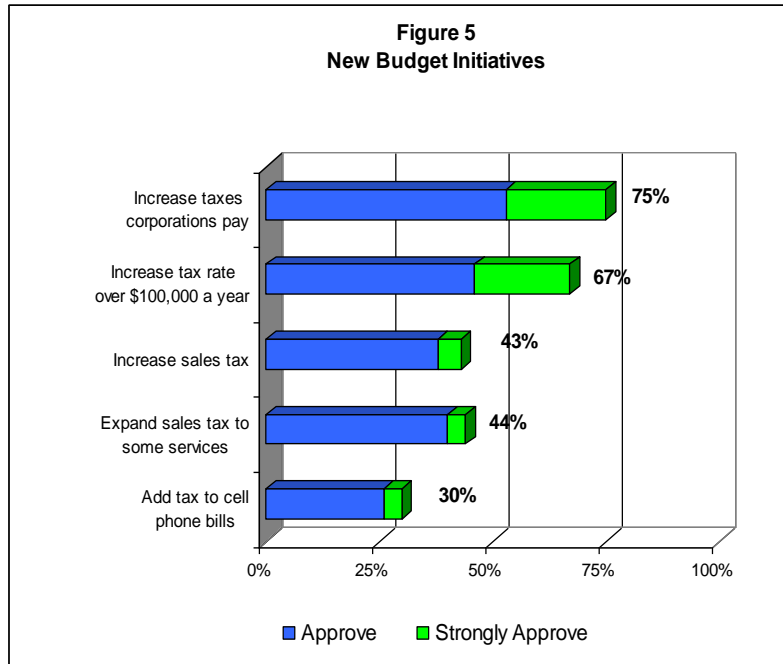


Table 3 shows the breakdown of this series of questions by approval and disapproval.

	Strongly Approve	Approve	Disapprove	Strongly Disapprove
Increase the amount of taxes corporations pay	22%	53%	18%	3%
Increase the tax rate for individuals earning over \$100,000 per year	21%	46%	25%	5%
Increase sales tax from 5% to 6%	5%	38%	42%	14%
Expand sales tax to include services such as accounting, legal, or beautician services	4%	40%	43%	8%
Allow counties to add a 6% tax to individual cell phone bills	4%	26%	51%	15%

Section C: Legalization of Slot Machines

The legalization of slot machines in Maryland has been a major issue in the 2003 Maryland General Assembly. When the public is asked, about 22% of those queried said they “strongly favor” the initiative and another 35% said they “favor” the initiative. In total,

about 57% of Marylanders approve of legalizing slot machines. Table 4 shows the results of those that “strongly favored” or “favored”. Most Marylanders favored legalization for two main reasons. About 45% of respondents said, “the state needs the money.” Another 21% said that they did not want the money “to go to Delaware or West Virginia.” Table 4 shows the respondents’ reasons for why they favor or oppose slot machines. The N for this question was 324.

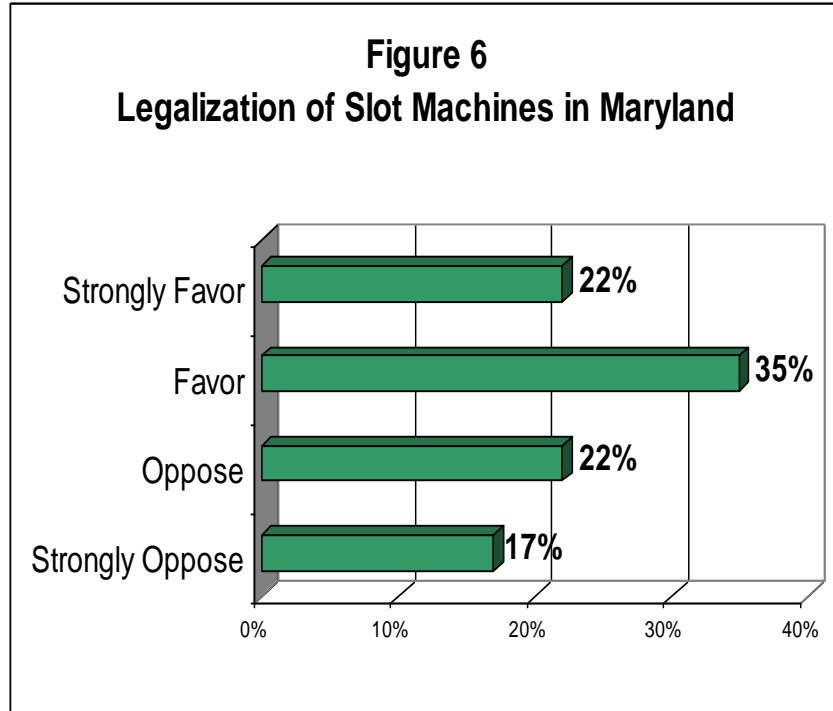
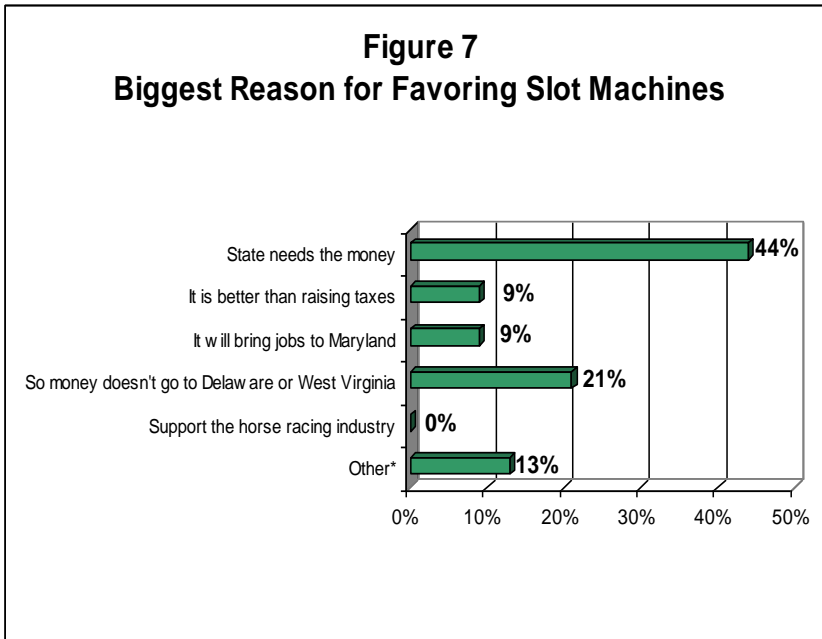


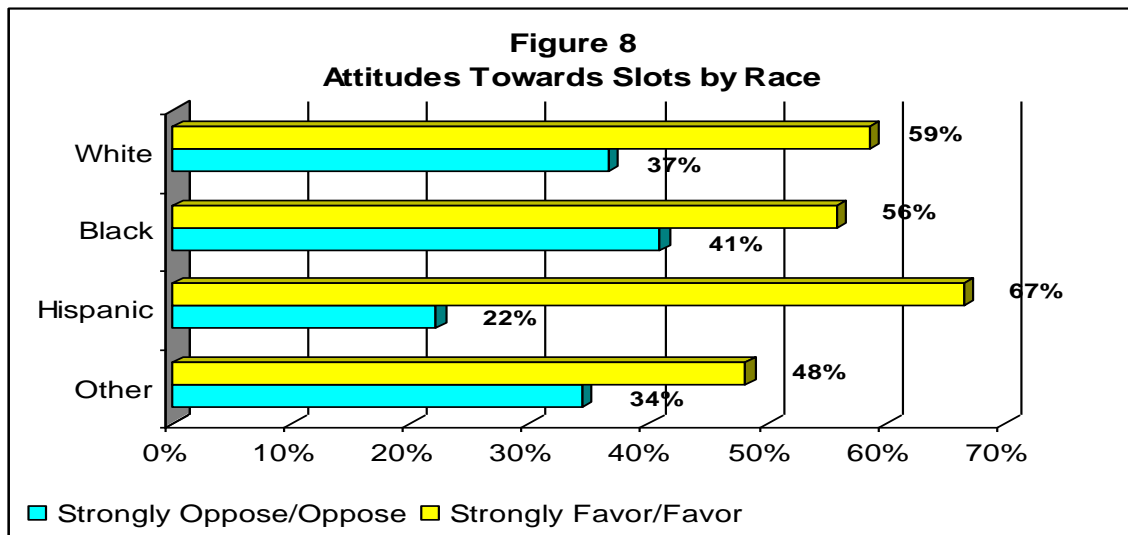
Table 4 Reasons for Favoring or Opposing Slot Machines (N=324)	
	Percent
It will harm poor people	33%
Will not have economic benefits	10%
Fear of crime associated with gambling	13%
Morally opposed to gambling	13%
It will hurt neighborhoods	5%
Against religious teaching	3%

The respondents were then asked if they favored or opposed the legalization of casino gambling in Maryland. Respondents were slightly more opposed (50%) legalizing casino gambling than in favor of it (44%). Respondents were then asked if slots or casinos were legalized in Maryland if they would approve or disapprove of gambling at other locations.

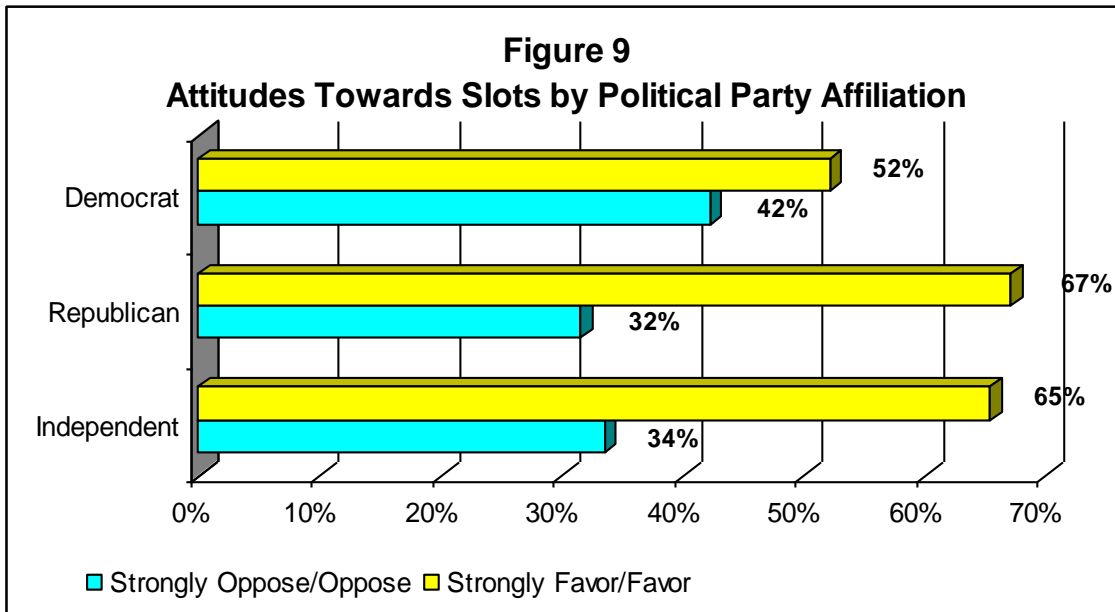
Seventy-eight percent (78%) approve of gambling at horse racing tracks, 50% approve of gambling at tourist areas (such as Ocean City, as Baltimore's Inner Harbor, Rocky Gap Resort), and only 21% approve of gambling at any commercial location. The main reason that Marylanders say they approve of the legalization of slots is because the state needs the money.



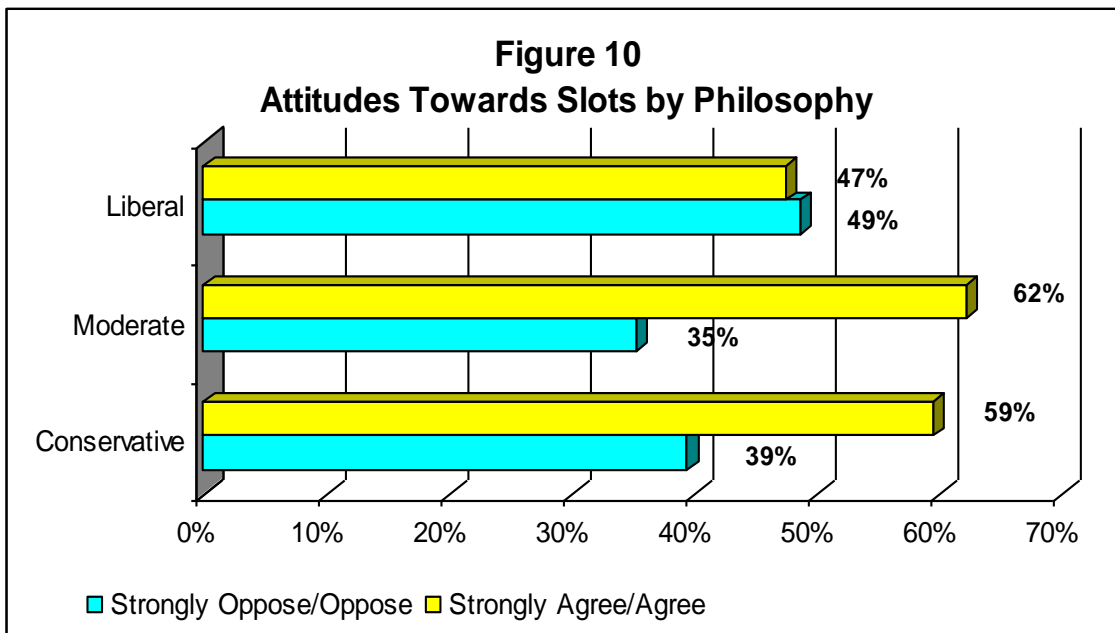
The survey divided race into four categories – white, black, Hispanic, and other. When further examined by race, two-thirds (67%) of Hispanics “strongly favor” and “favor” the legalization of slots compared with 59% of Whites, 56% of Blacks, and 48% of the “Other” category.



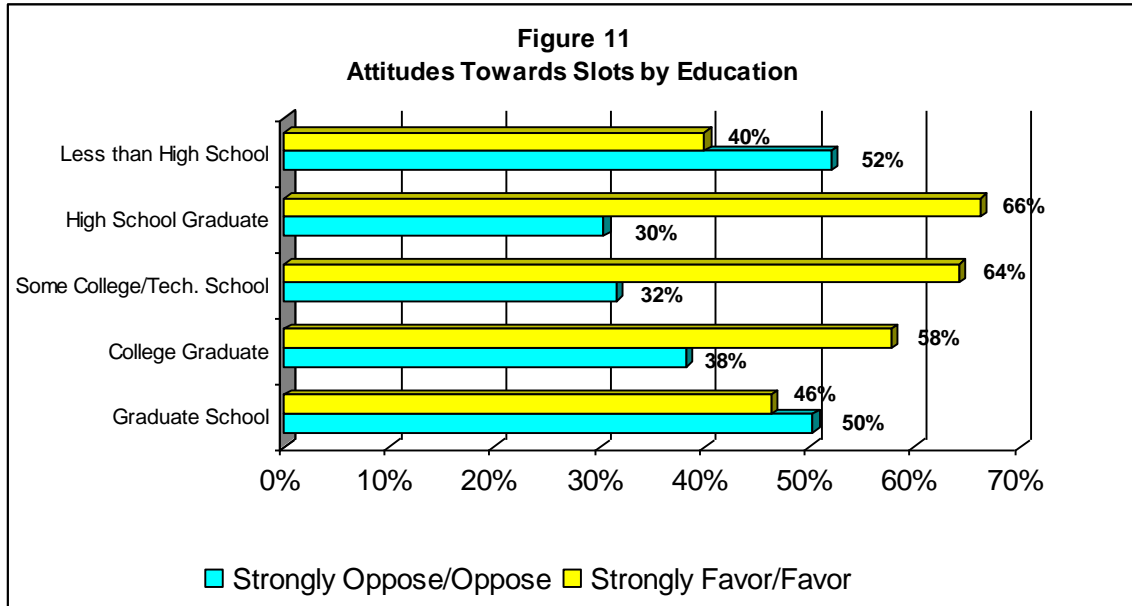
When analyzed by political party, Republicans (67%) “strongly favor” or “favor” the legalization of slots more than registered members of other parties. They were followed by registered Independents (65%) and Democrats (52%).



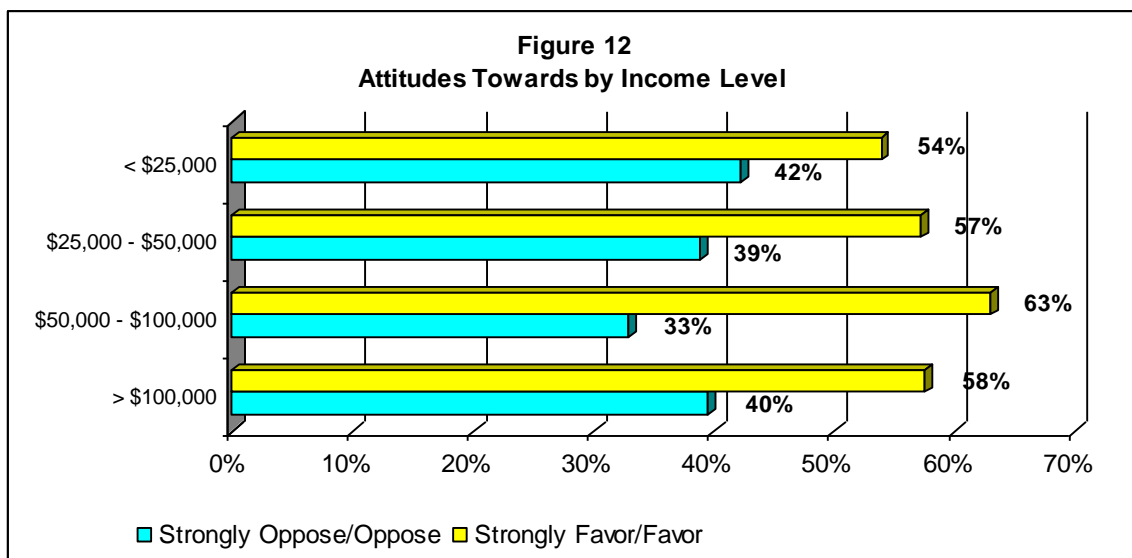
When examined by political philosophy, Moderates (62%) “strongly favor” or “favor” the legalization of slots closely followed by Conservatives (59%). Liberals (48%) “strongly favor” or “favor” the legalization of slots the least.



When opinions were broken-down by level of education, high school graduates (66%) were more likely to “strongly favor” or “favor” the legalization of slots. They were followed closely by respondents with some college or technical school (64%). Respondents with less than a high school education were least likely (40%) to “strongly favor” or “favor” the legalization of slots.



When analyzed by level of income, those in the \$25,000 to \$50,000 level were more likely (63%) to “strongly favor” or “favor” the legalization of slots. The least likely to “strongly favor” or “favor” the legalization of slots were respondents with an income of less than \$25,000.



Section D: Undocumented Immigrants

Several questions were asked about undocumented immigrants and foreign students.

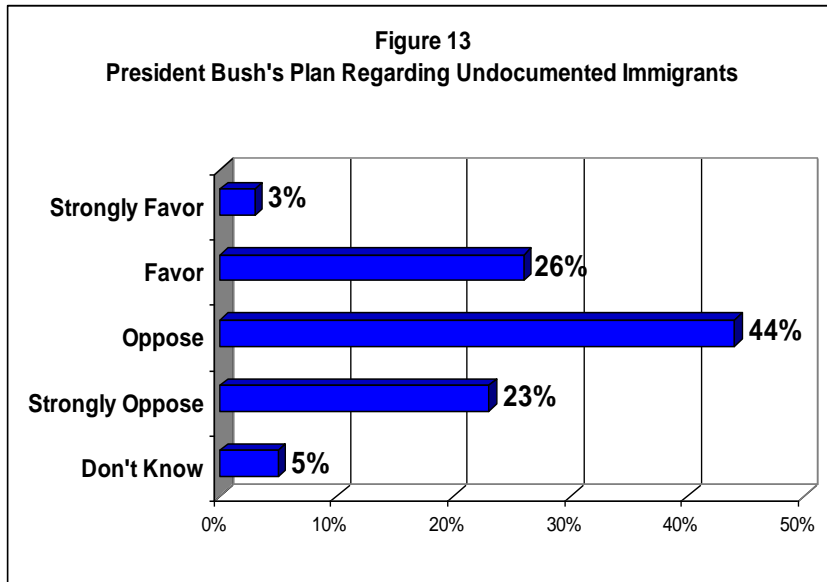
Question: *Do you favor or oppose President Bush's plan allowing undocumented immigrants to apply for three year work visas?*

Question: *Do you favor or oppose allowing undocumented immigrants to obtain Maryland driver's licenses?*

Question: *Do you favor or oppose allowing the children of undocumented immigrants to attend public schools in Maryland?*

Question: *Would you favor or oppose allowing foreign born students to pay the lower in-state tuition rates in Maryland colleges instead of the higher out-of-state rates charged to U. S. students from other states?*

Only about 29% of respondents either "strongly favor" or "favor" President Bush's plan allowing undocumented immigrants to apply for three year work visas. This sentiment continues with only 21% favor allowing undocumented immigrants to obtain Maryland driver's licenses.



However, some 59% favor allowing the children of undocumented immigrants to attend public schools in Maryland. On a similar note, 76% oppose allowing foreign born students to pay the lower in-state tuition rates in Maryland colleges instead of the higher out-of-state rates charged to U. S. students from other states.

Section E: Agriculture and the Chesapeake Bay

The Department of Agriculture shares responsibility for Chesapeake Bay policy. Part of this mission is to educate the public about the influence that various activities have on the bay. Accordingly, the department is interested in what the public views as the primary threats to the bay.

Question: *Next, I'm going to read you a list of possible threats to the Chesapeake Bay. For each, please tell me if you think it has a major impact, a minor impact, or not much of an impact at all on the health of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries.*

*Industrial discharge
Sewerage treatment plants discharge
Farm runoff
Storm water runoff from urban areas
Growth and development activities*

Ninety-four percent (94%) of Marylanders feel that it is very important or somewhat important to preserve land for farming. Table 5 shows the views of Marylanders where the following threats to the Chesapeake Bay cause a major impact, minor impact, or not much of an impact.

	Major Impact	Minor Impact	Not much of an Impact
Industrial Discharge	66%	27%	5%
Sewage Treatment Plant Discharge	79%	62%	3%
Farm Run-off	62%	28%	5%
Storm Water Run-off from Urban Areas	52%	37%	6%
Growth and Development Activities	60%	28%	6%

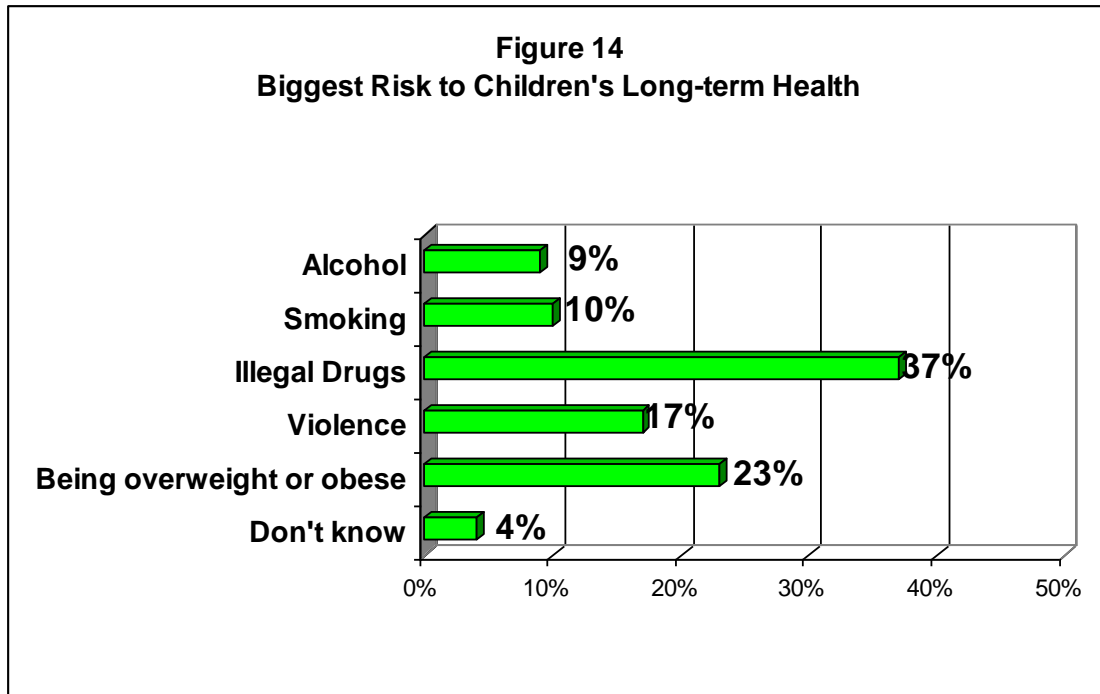
In general, the public ranks the threat from sewage treat plant discharge highest with some 79% of respondents said it has a “major impact” on the Chesapeake Bay. Second was industrial discharge with some 66% of respondents saying it had a “major impact”. More day-to-day events or activities were ranked lower. Over half (52%) identified storm water runoff from urban areas as having a “major impact” and 60% said they thought growth and development activities also had a “major impact”. In addition, farm runoff was thought to have a “major impact” by 62% of those responding.

Both sewage treatment plant discharge and industrial discharge are important issues having become relatively more important in recent years. In part, this is due to the emphasis put on earlier growth activities and farm runoff. Nonetheless, the public still tends to underestimate the impact of farm runoff, storm water, and growth activities on the bay.

In a related agricultural question, 67% of respondents have purchased agricultural products directly from a farmer, a farmers market, or an on-farm sales outlet.

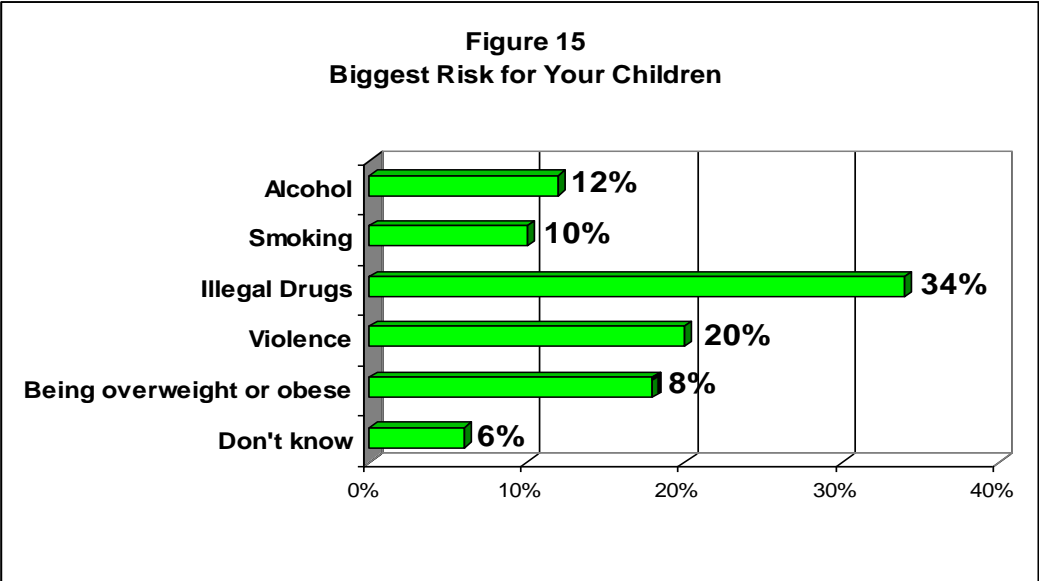
Section F: Children's Health and Well-being

A series of questions were asked about children's health and well-being. Marylanders were asked what they thought was the biggest risk to *all* children's long-term health, well-being and quality of life. Over a third of respondents (37%) thought illegal drugs were the biggest risk followed by being overweight or obese (23%). About 17% believed that violence was the biggest risk to children's long-term health, well being and quality of life.

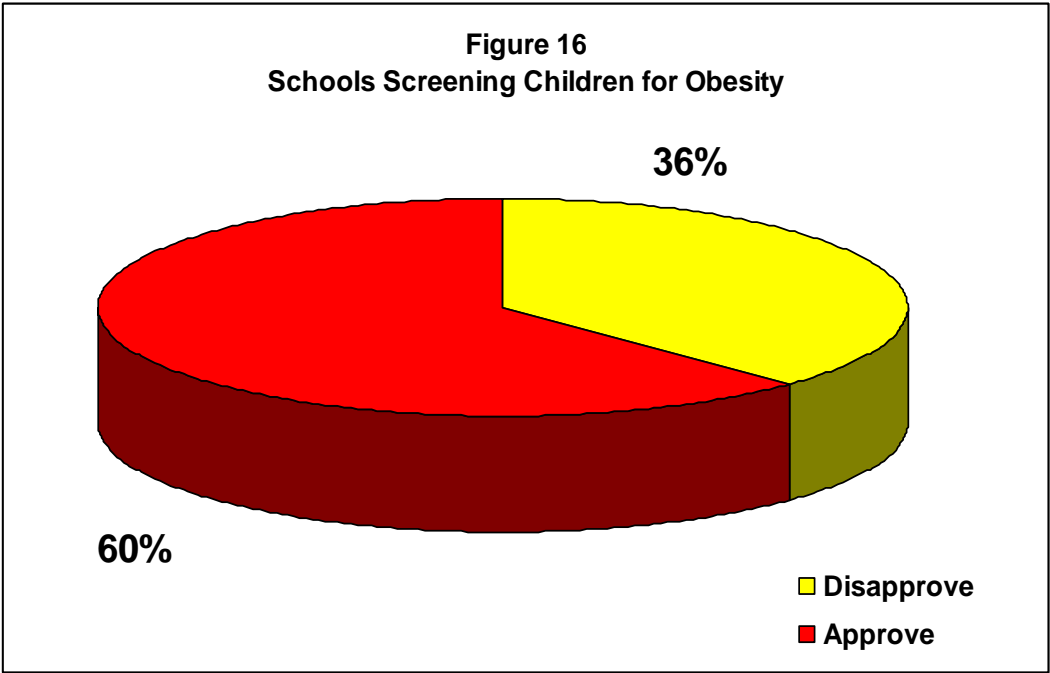


When respondents with children or grandchildren under age 18 were asked the same question about their children (or grandchildren) the responses stayed consistent. Illegal drugs (34%) were still considered the greatest risk to their children. Violence (20%) slightly edged out being overweight or obese (18%) as a large risk to respondent's children.

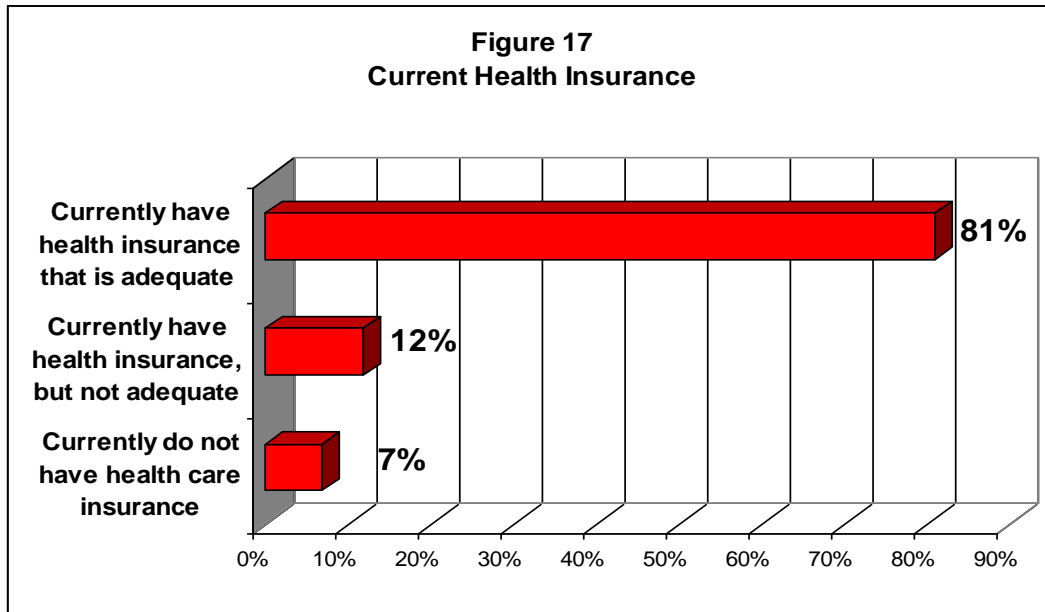
In the past several years, media outlets have publicized the problem of obesity in our nation, especially the growing trend of obesity within our children. We asked some questions related directly to obesity and physical fitness in youth. Over half (51%) of Marylanders feel that the amount of time devoted to physical education or recess should be increased. Thirty-seven percent (37%) believe it should stay constant.



As shown in Figure 16, 60% of respondents approve of schools conducting obesity screenings and reporting the results to parents. Much like hearing, vision and scoliosis screening are currently conducted in most schools.



Section G: Health Insurance

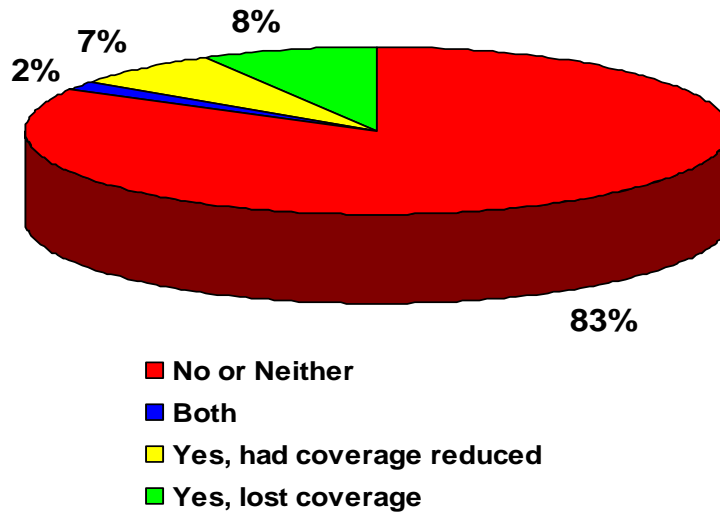


The issue of health care coverage is a major area of concern in the United States since millions of Americans do not have health insurance. In Maryland about 81% percent of residents have health insurance that they consider adequate for their health care needs. An additional 12% have health insurance but are underinsured. This means their coverage does not meet their health care needs. Seven percent (7%) of respondents do not have health insurance. About 38% of respondents had chronic health conditions.

A question was then asked about how respondents thought families without health insurance received health care. Many Marylanders (37%) thought these families went without health care. More than a quarter (28%) of Marylanders believed uninsured families went to the local emergency room.

	Percent
Go without any health care at all	37%
Apply for health care benefits under Medicaid	9%
Go to a public health clinic or community health center	18%
Go to a local hospital emergency room	28%

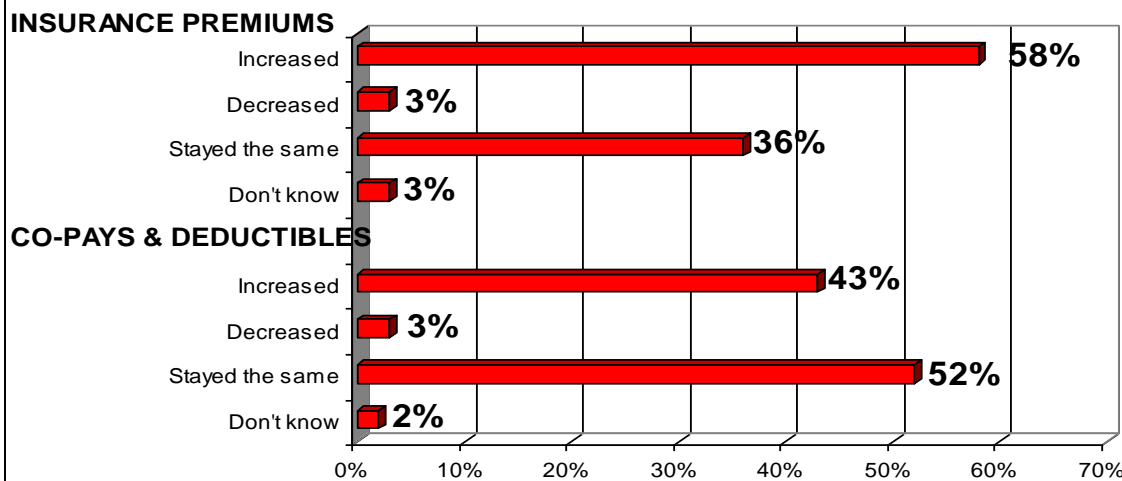
Figure 18
Marylander's with Loss or Reduction of Health Insurance Coverage



About 8% of Marylanders have lost their health insurance in the past 18 months. An additional 7% had their health insurance coverage reduced and about 2% had both coverage reduced and lost. A large number of Marylanders (78%) have health insurance that is partially or fully paid for by their employer.

The next few questions related to premium, co-payment, and deductible price hikes. Over the past year, the majority of Marylanders (58%) experienced an increase in their premiums. With respect to co-payments and deductibles, 43% experienced an increase in these areas.

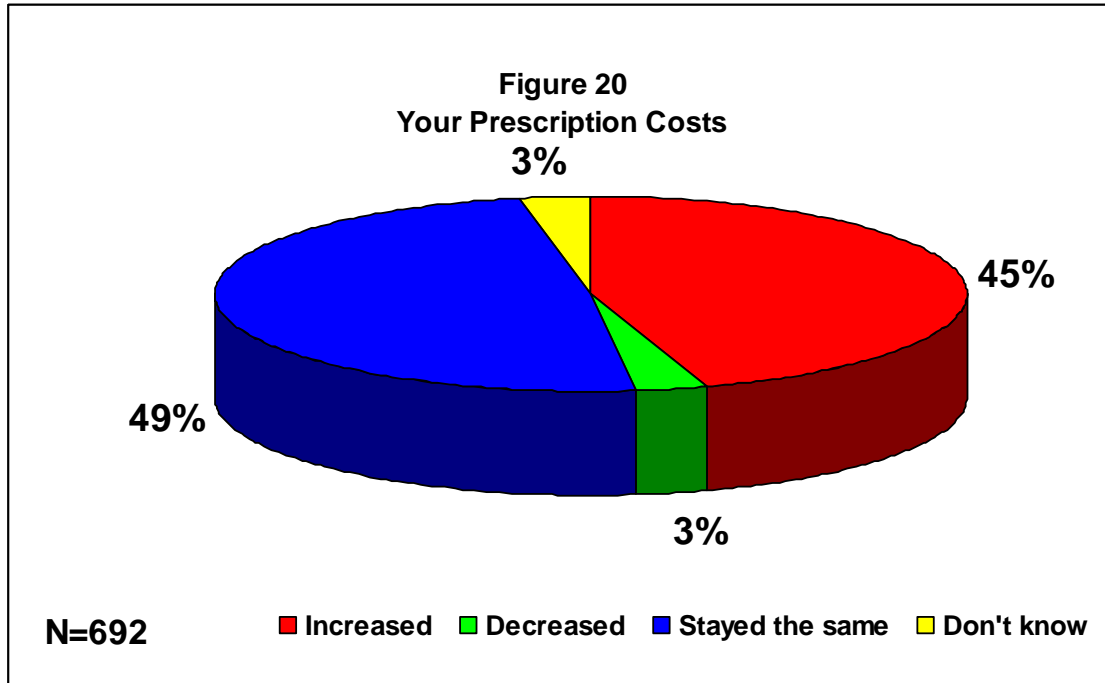
Figure 19
Cost Increases In Premiums, Co-pays, and Deductibles



Section H: Prescription Drugs

Several questions were asked about prescription drugs, and prescription drug coverage in health insurances.

Eighty-four percent (84%) of Marylanders have prescription drug coverage.



A majority of Marylanders (66%) also have a prescription plan that has a fixed amount or percentage of the total cost. As shown in Figure 20, nearly half of respondents (45%) stated that their portion of prescription costs has increased in the past year. About 18% of respondents did not have a prescription filled because they thought they could not afford it. Fifteen percent (15%) have taken less than the prescribed amount of medication in order to save money.

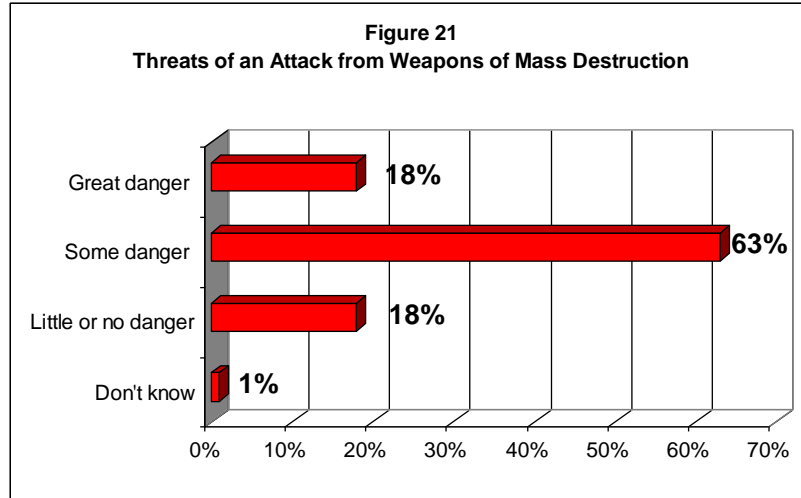
Several questions were asked relating to prescription drug coverage for seniors. The State of Maryland has a program called the Maryland Pharmacy Discount for senior citizens. Surprisingly, sixty-two percent (62%) of Marylanders had not heard of the program. An overwhelming 85% of respondents thought that universal prescription drug coverage should be part of Medicare or Medicaid. Of these 85% that felt that universal prescription drug coverage should be part of Medicare or Medicaid, 86% would continue to agree even it meant raising taxes.

Section I: Terrorism

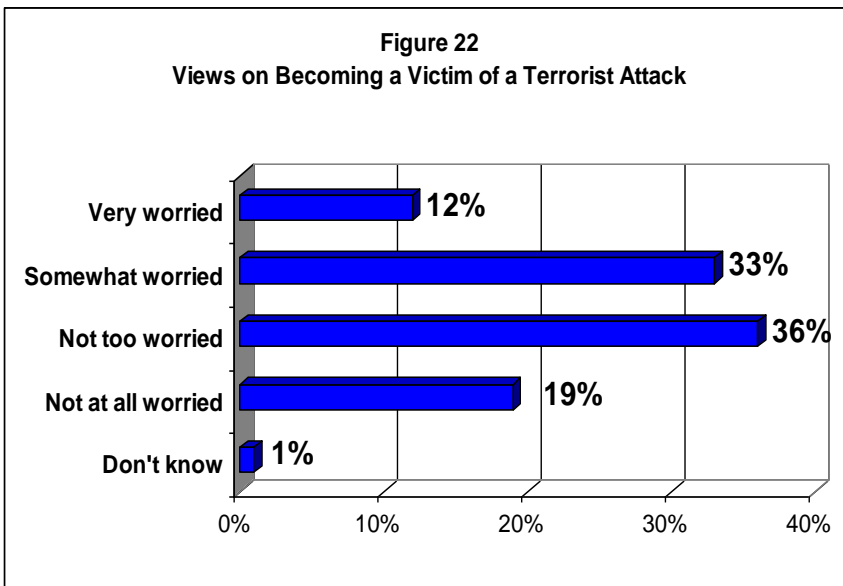
Several questions were asked about terrorism, weapons of mass destruction, and the preparedness of the United States and Maryland to fight against terrorism.

The Maryland public remains rightly concerned about a Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) attack. Clearly they understand that the war on terrorism is going to be a long one and that terrorists may be prepared to strike at our homeland again, possibly with devastating consequences.

About 63% of Marylanders felt that we are in some danger from an attack from a weapon of mass destruction. The rest of the respondents were split pretty evenly between concerns that we were in great danger or that we face little or no danger from a weapon of mass destruction.



Question: All in all, how worried are you that you or someone in your family might become a victim of a terrorist attack?



At the same time, there appears to be a belief that such a WMD attack might not occur here or have consequences for them. So while there is a generalized preparedness, there appears to be a disconnect about the ramifications of an attack in Maryland. This raises the possibility that the local population may not fully understand the personal consequences of a WMD attack and may not be fully prepared to weather such an attack.”

Almost 55% of respondents were not too worried or worried at all about being the victim of a terrorist attack.

The final question on terrorism dealt with the preparedness of various agencies and governments. It was asked if the agencies or governments were reasonably ready to prevent a terrorist attack. Generally, most federal agencies were thought to be well prepared, with the Department of Homeland Security (47%), the Department of Defense (59%), and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) (55%). But when it came to the state, only 38% of respondents thought Maryland was prepared. Under one third (30%) believed their local governments were prepared and 33% believed the local health departments were prepared.

The State of Maryland is seen as doing all it can to prevent terrorist attacks, yet nearly one-quarter of the surveyed population raises the need for Maryland to do more on the terrorist prevention front. This suggests that the state is making a concerted effort on this front; however, later questions still cite a lack of State preparedness on the anti-terrorism front. About 64% of respondents suggest that the State is doing all it can to prevent terrorist attacks, but only 38% of respondents believe the State is well prepared to deal with a terrorist attack.

Survey respondents credit the Department of Defense and the CDC for being well prepared to deal with a terrorist attack; however, they do not feel that State or local governments or their local health care systems are well prepared to face a terrorist attack. This is a very worrisome finding, since the immediate consequences of a WMD attack will have a significant local impact and local health systems will have to be in the forefront of consequence management of a WMD attack. National developments such as the formation of a Department of Homeland Security and the well managed response of CDC to the SARS outbreak help allay local fears, but clearly, further efforts to upgrade State-local preparedness and communicate these efforts to the general public are of the first order." About 55 to 60% of survey respondents believe that the DOD and CDC are well prepared. Slightly more than one-third of respondents feel State and local governments and the local health care system are well prepared.

Some significant work needs to be done in Maryland to upgrade State and local abilities to prevent and mitigate a WMD attack. This is a task that cannot be put off until tomorrow given the absolutely devastating consequences of a WMD attack. We all must get to a higher level of preparedness as quickly as possible, especially our health care systems.

Survey Demographics

Gender	Male	269	33%
	Female	556	67%
Race	White	564	68%
	Black	208	25%
	Hispanic	11	1%
	Other	32	4%
	Refused	10	1%
Education	< than High School	50	6%
	High School Grad/GED	206	25%
	Some College/Tech School	191	23%
	College Graduate	227	28%
	Graduate or Professional School	148	18%
Party	Democrat	396	48%
	Republican	210	26%
	Independent	96	12%
	Not Registered	90	11%
Ideology	Liberal	185	22%
	Moderate	236	29%
	Conservative	166	20%
	Don't think in those terms	220	27%
Income	<\$25K annual	110	13%
	\$25K to \$50K	199	24%
	\$50K to \$100K	257	31%
	>\$100K	127	15%
Region	Baltimore City	99	12%
	Baltimore Metro	298	36%
	DC Metro	227	28%
	Western MD	70	9%
	Southern MD	57	7%
	Eastern Shore	75	9%