

MARYLAND POLICY CHOICES: 2006

PUBLIC OPINION AND POLICY CHOICES

**SCHAEFER CENTER
FOR PUBLIC POLICY**



*School of Public Affairs
University of Baltimore
1304 St. Paul Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21202
www.scpp.ubalt.edu
410.837.6188*

PRINCIPAL RESEARCHERS

*Ann Cotten, D.P.A.
Don Haynes, Ph.D.
Chris Scalchunes, M.P.A.
Mary E. W. Lovegrove, J.D., M.B.A.
John J. Callahan, Ph.D.*

JANUARY 2006

UNIVERSITY *of* BALTIMORE

ABOUT THE SCHAEFER CENTER FOR PUBLIC POLICY

The Schaefer Center for Public Policy was established in 1985 with a mission to bring the University of Baltimore'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 strong emphasis on teaching, research, and public service. Faculty members in the School of Public Affairs are expected to contribute to the scholarly literature in the field of public administration and be involved in applied research activities.

The Schaefer Center is committed to serving its constituency - the public sector in the Maryland region. 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 twenty years, the Schaefer Center has been awarded hundreds of grants and contracts from various local, state, and federal agencies, as well as nonprofit organizations. The Center's staff has trained 4,600 State of Maryland public servants in the Maryland Managing for Results Program. Our service commitment is also indicated in the pro bono work we complete, including consulting services to nonprofit organizations, research and report writing on issues of interest to public officials, and conducting educational conferences.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Maryland Policy Choices: 2006	1
Sampling	1
Reporting Conventions	1
Contributors	1
Government Priorities and Performance	2
Influenza and Public Health Emergencies	7
Health Insurance in Maryland	11
Prescription Drug Coverage and Coverage Costs	14
Senior Citizens and Prescription Coverage	17
Terrorism	19
Natural Disasters	21
Illegal Immigration	24
Highway Construction Zone Safety	27
Proposed Driving Under the Influence Laws and Policies	28
The Chesapeake Bay	30
Maryland Agriculture	32
Survey Demographics	34
Endnotes	35

TABLE OF GRAPHICS

CHARTS

Chart 1: Most Important Problems Facing the State Legislature This Year	2
Chart 2: Expectation for the Maryland Economy	3
Chart 3: Personal Economic Situation	4
Chart 4: Perception of State Government Performance	5
Chart 5: Prevalence of Yearly Influenza Vaccination	7
Chart 6: Site of Most Recent Influenza Vaccination	8
Chart 7: Personal Concern Over a Flu Pandemic	9
Chart 8: Sources of Information During a Public Health Emergency	10
Chart 9: Current Health Insurance Situation	11
Chart 10: Health Insurance Costs Over the Past Year	12
Chart 11: Health Care for the Uninsured	13
Chart 12: Prescription Drug Coverage	14
Chart 13: Variability of Prescription Costs Over the Past Year	15
Chart 14: Impact of Prescription Costs on Behavior	16
Chart 15: Awareness of Maryland Pharmacy Discount Program	17
Chart 16: Universal Prescription Drug Coverage Under Medicaid	18
Chart 17: Danger From a Weapon of Mass Destruction	19
Chart 18: Preparedness for a Biological WMD	20
Chart 19: Likelihood of a Katrina Type Disaster Striking	21
Chart 20: Source of Help in the Event of a Natural Disaster	22
Chart 21: Confidence in Maryland's Preparedness for Natural Disaster	23
Chart 22: Problem of Illegal Immigration	24
Chart 23: Reasons Why Illegal Immigration is a Problem	25
Chart 24: Illegal Immigration Issues	26
Chart 25: Proposed Penalties for Highway Work Zone Infractions	27
Chart 26: Effectiveness of Proposed DUI Policies	28
Chart 27: Approval of Proposed DUI Penalties	29
Chart 28: Impacts on the Chesapeake Bay	30
Chart 29: Recollection of Maryland Crab Advertising Campaign	31
Chart 30: Likelihood of Buying Produce Identified as Maryland Grown	32
Chart 31: Preservation of Farmland	33

TABLES

Table 1: Spending Priorities by Program Area	6
Table 2: Immigration a Major Problem by Region	24
Table 3: Survey Demographics	34

MARYLAND POLICY CHOICES: 2006

During the period from November 27 through December 16, 2005, the Schaefer Center for Public Policy at the University of Baltimore conducted a statewide public opinion survey to elicit public perceptions and opinions on a broad range of public policy topics including: state priorities, the economy, the state budget, education, and health care. These are issues public officials will likely be facing during the 2006 Legislative session.

SAMPLING

Surveyors telephoned and interviewed 815 randomly selected Maryland residents over the age of 21. Phone numbers were selected from a computer generated list of all possible phone numbers in Maryland. The margin of error for this survey is +/- 3.44% at the 95% confidence level.

REPORTING CONVENTIONS USED IN THIS REPORT

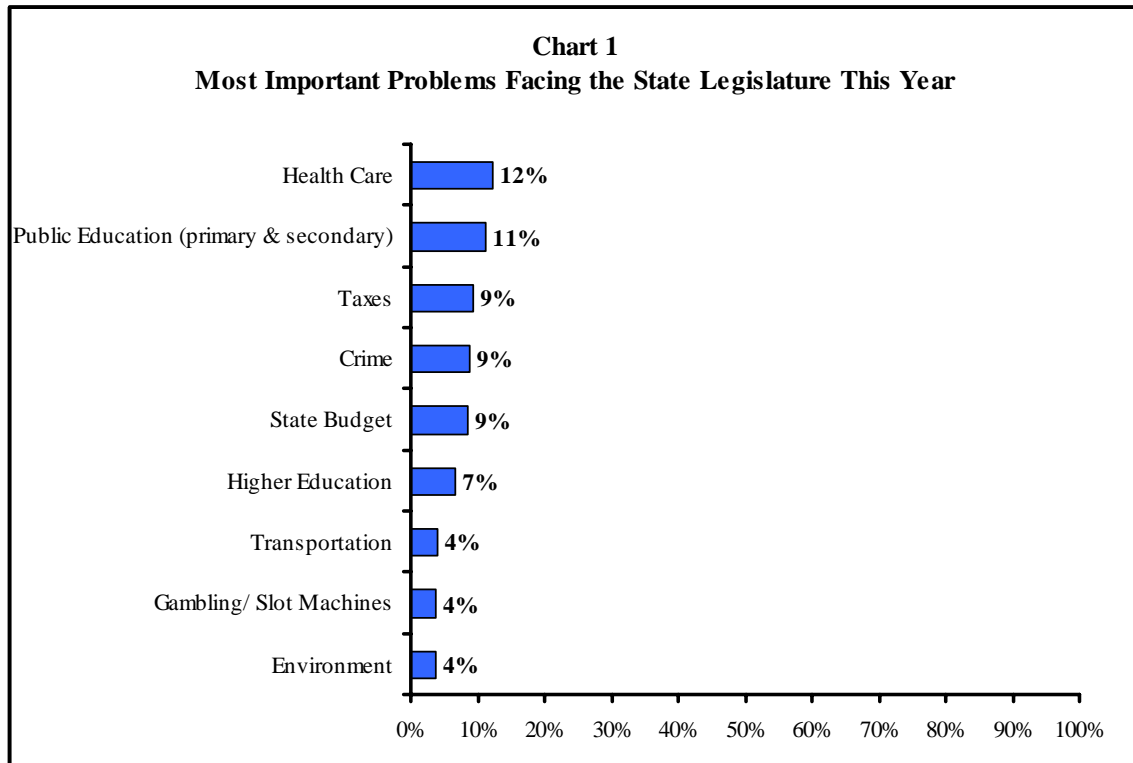
To simplify reporting, survey results described in this document have been rounded to the nearest whole percentage. In some cases, where missing data and refusals are not presented, the figures reported will not sum to 100. In effect, this creates a relatively more conservative interpretation of the data.

CONTRIBUTORS

The survey was designed and implemented by the staff at the Schaefer Center for Public Policy of the School of Public Affairs at the University of Baltimore. Principals include Dr. Ann Cotten, Director of the Schaefer Center, Dr. Don Haynes, Director of Survey Research at the Schaefer Center, Dr. John Callahan, Director of the University of Baltimore's Health Systems Management Program, Dr. Alan Lyles, Mr. Christopher Scalchunes, Survey Research Supervisor, Ms. Mary Lovegrove, Assistant Director of the Schaefer Center, the professional CATI Lab survey interviewers, and the Schaefer Center for Public Policy Graduate Fellows.

GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES AND PERFORMANCE

The first question asked the respondents to identify what they believed to be the single most important issue facing the Maryland State Legislature in 2006. Respondents were not prompted with a list of priorities, but were allowed to identify the issues on their own. Chart 1 displays the results for this first question.

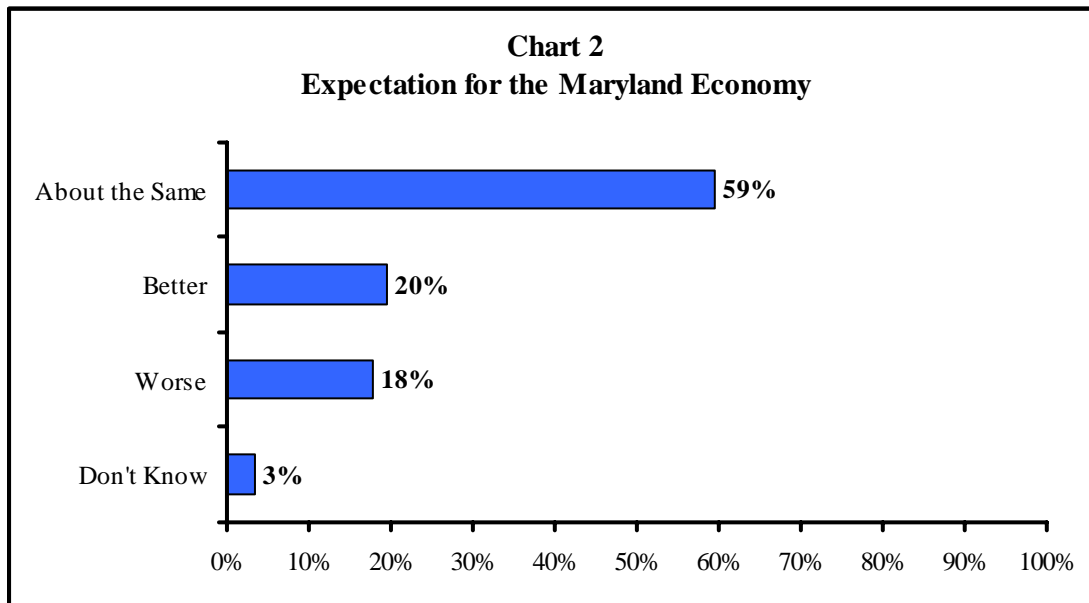


“What do you consider to be the most important problem facing the state legislature in the next year?”

Health care (12%), public education (11%), taxes (9%), crime (9%), and the state budget (9%) accounted for over 50% of the responses. Growth management, welfare, drug abuse, terrorism were mentioned by only a few of the respondents as being of primary importance to the Maryland Legislature. Collectively these issues accounted for about 6% of all responses.

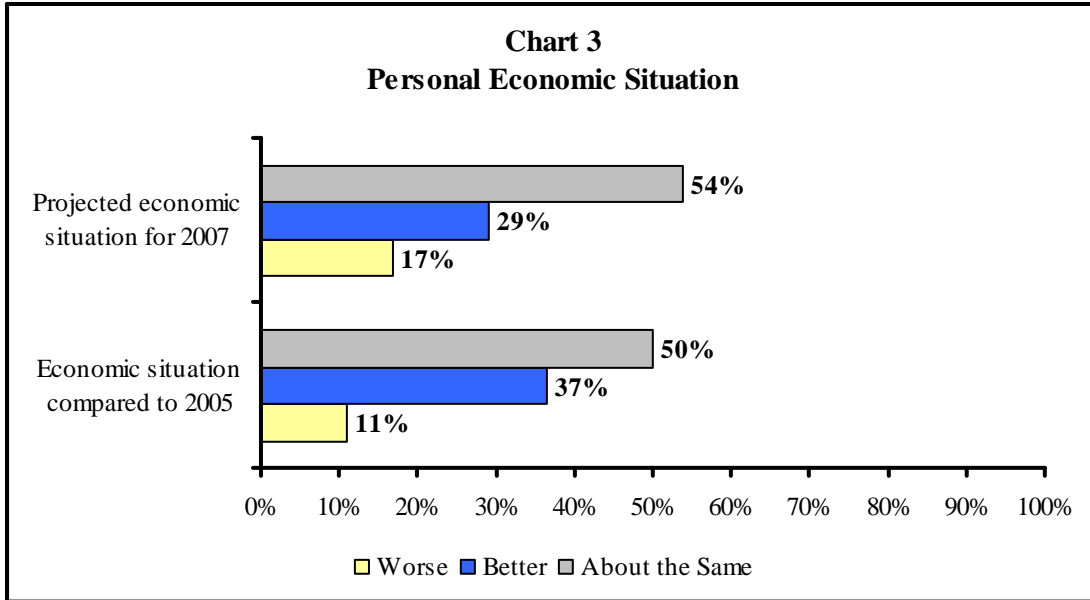
For the first time in many years, the state budget has not ranked as the number one priority for the Maryland State Legislature. Two years ago, 28% of the respondents held the opinion that the state budget was the most important issue; in 2006 this number stands at 9%.

Respondents were asked if they thought the Maryland economy would get better, get worse, or stay about the same in 2006. Chart 2 shows that 79% of those surveyed believed the Maryland economy would either stay the same or improve over the next year. Marylanders are somewhat more optimistic about the economy this year with only 18% of those surveyed believing the Maryland economy would get worse in 2006 than it was in 2005. Last year, 28% expected the 2005 economy to worsen.



“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?”

Most respondents (79%) believed that the Maryland economy in 2006 will either be the same or better than the Maryland economy in 2005. When asked about their personal economic situation this year and their expectations for their personal economic situation for the upcoming year, respondents are similarly more optimistic than last year. As indicated in Chart 3, the results are quite similar to the results for the question concerning the Maryland economy as discussed above.

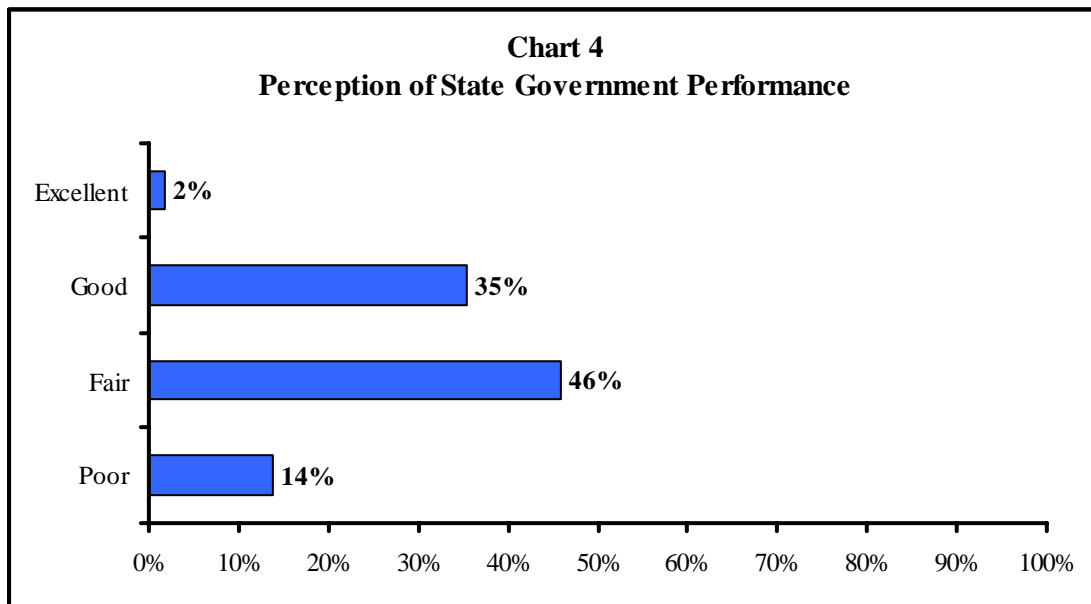


“What about your personal economic situation, are you better off, are you worse off, or do you think you are about the same as you were last year?”

“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?”

A large majority of respondents (87%) felt that their own personal economic situation would either improve or remain the same next year, with only 11% dissenting and expressing the belief that their situation would get worse. Fifty-four percent (54%) of those surveyed say their economic situation has not changed from last year, while almost 30% feel their economic situation has improved over the past year. Only 17% of those surveyed believed that they were economically worse off this year than last. This is a slight improvement over 2005’s results which found only 25% of those interviewed thought they were better off, and 22% thought they were worse off economically than in the previous year.

Respondents were next asked to rate the performance of the Maryland State Government.



“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?”

Not quite half of the people surveyed (46%) rate the performance of Maryland’s government as fair in solving the problems in our state. Over one-third (35%) rate the government’s performance as “good”, while only 14% feel Maryland’s government performance is “poor”. A handful (2%) of the individuals surveyed believed the government does an excellent job of solving the problems in our state. Results from last year’s survey are close to the results from this year’s, with the biggest difference being a shift of 6 points from the “fair” and “poor” categories to the “good” and “excellent” categories.

Respondents were read a list of spending priorities that are funded by state or local government and asked whether they thought Maryland should spend more, less or the same amount of money in each program area. Respondents were reminded that spending increases would probably come out of tax money paid by the citizens. Interestingly, there were no demands for cuts in any single program, but there were program areas that received lower levels of support from respondents.

Table 1
Spending Priorities by Program Area

<i>Program Area</i>	<i>Spend More</i>	<i>Spend Less</i>	<i>Spend the Same</i>
Elementary and secondary schools	70%	2%	26%
Prescription benefits for elderly	70%	6%	22%
Police and public safety	62%	2%	35%
Medical assistance to the poor	62%	3%	32%
Programs for the elderly	55%	3%	40%
Public assistance to the poor	51%	5%	41%
Protecting the environment	45%	8%	46%
Protection against terrorist attacks	44%	11%	42%
Public transportation	38%	7%	52%
Roads and highways	38%	9%	52%
State universities and colleges	38%	9%	50%
Aid to Baltimore City	29%	19%	45%
Parks and recreation	23%	13%	63%
Prisons and corrections	24%	17%	53%
Open space and parkland	22%	20%	54%
Aid to local governments	21%	21%	54%
Arts and cultural activities	18%	24%	55%

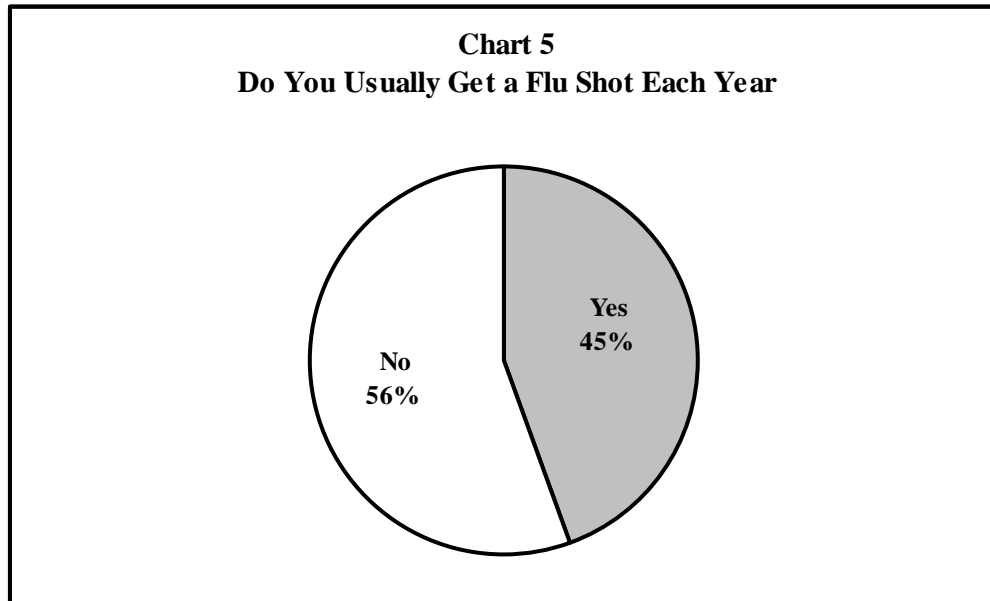
“I’d like to ask some questions about the government’s spending priorities. For each of these services funded by state or local government, tell me whether you think we should spend more money, spend less money, or whether there should be no change in the amount of money spent. Please keep in mind that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

Elementary and secondary school funding, prescription benefits for elderly, police and public safety, medical assistance to the poor, programs for the elderly and public assistance to the poor received the strongest amount of budgetary support with the majority of respondents saying state and local government should spend more in these areas.

Arts and cultural activities, aid to local governments, open space and parkland, as well as prisons and corrections, received the least amount of support for spending increases. These program areas also generally received the highest percentage of respondents calling for spending reductions.

INFLUENZA AND PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCIES

In 2005, Maryland and our nation faced a shortage of influenza vaccinations. In addition last year the deadly H5N1 ‘Bird Flu’ strain made and continues to make world wide headlines. In response to these current events respondents were asked a series of ‘flu related’ questions.

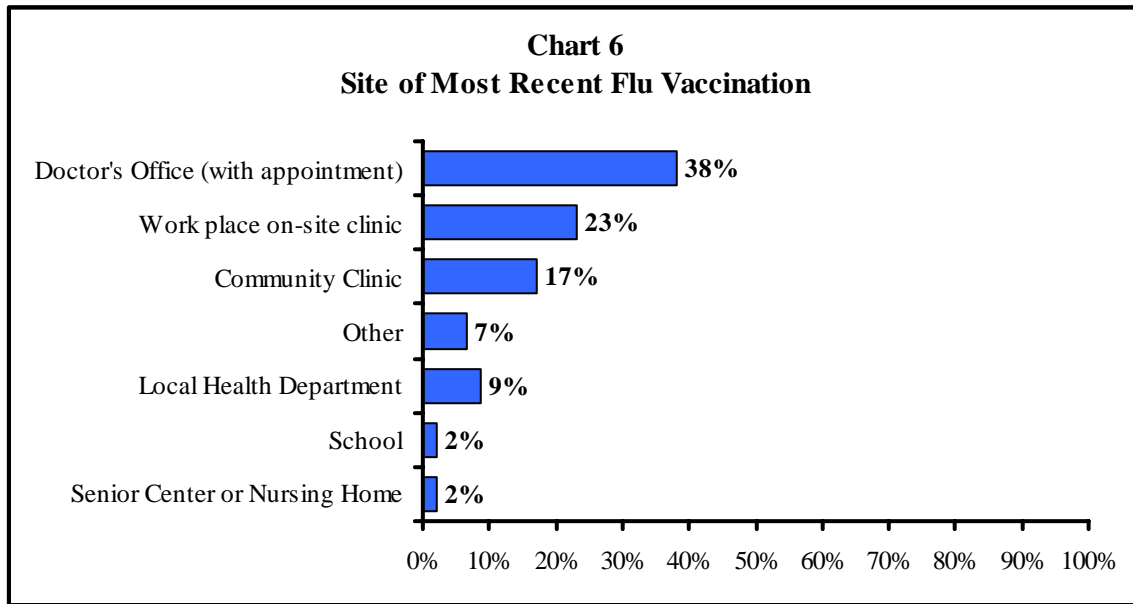


“Do you usually get a flu shot each year?”

Less than half of the respondents reported receiving yearly vaccination against influenza viruses. Those who reported that they did not usually get the yearly vaccine were asked if they had ever received a flu shot. Only 41% of these respondents stated that they had ever received a flu shot.

The lack of flu shot use can have significant health consequences among high priority populations needing the flu shot such as the elderly, nursing home residents, those with chronic medical conditions, health care-givers, and very young children. According to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), “... an average of 36,000 deaths and 200,000 hospitalizations annually”¹ can be attributed to influenza.

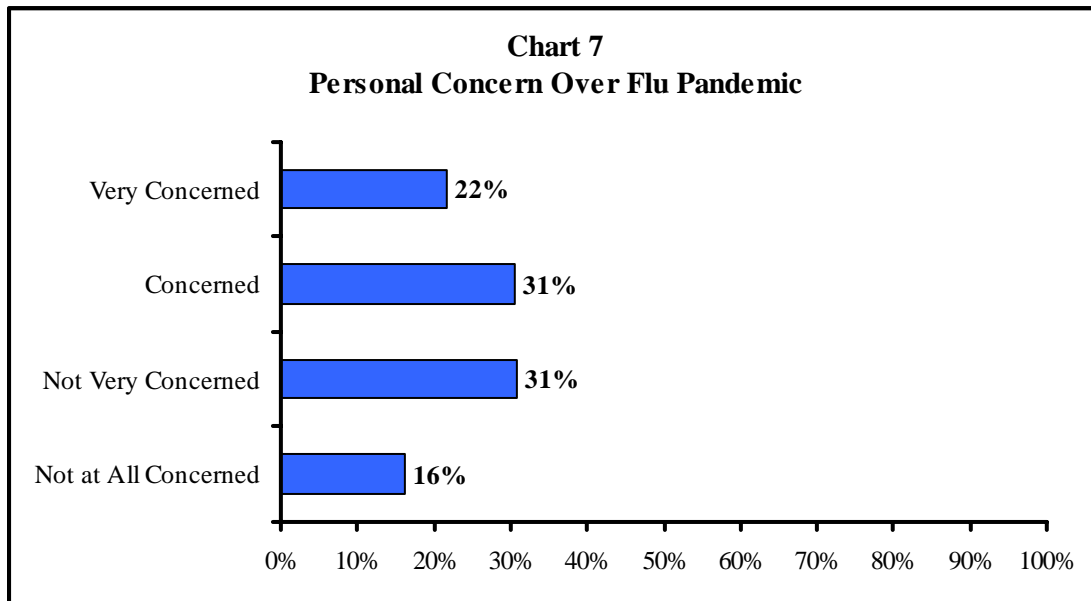
As a follow-up question, those who were identified as having received an influenza vaccination were asked where they had received their last flu shot.



“Where did you get your last flu shot?”

Sixty-one percent of the respondents stated they received their vaccinations either through appointments with their doctor (38%) or at a clinic set up at their place of employment (23%). Just 28% of the respondents obtained their vaccination through a public facility (community clinic 17%, local health department 9%, and school 2%). Most respondents rely on the private sector as the source for their influenza vaccinations.

It seems that every day there is news about the deadly H5N1 “Bird Flu” virus and its’ continued spread westward. Although we have not been affected directly in the United States by this virus, Marylanders do appear to be concerned about a flu pandemic.

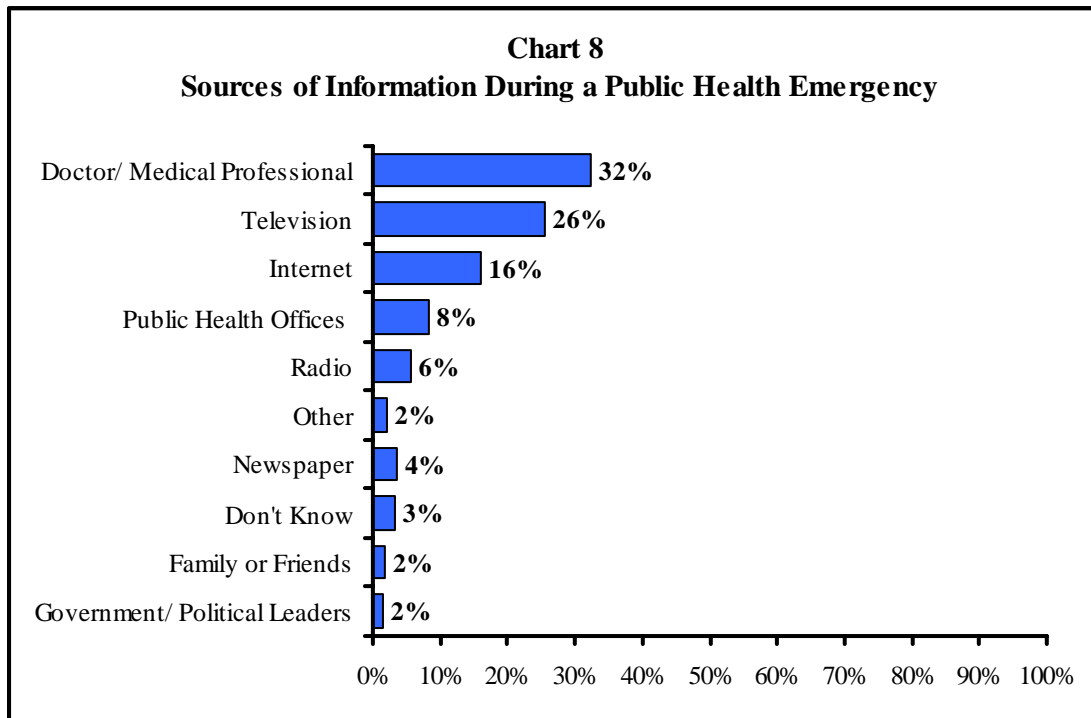


“How concerned are you personally about possibility of a flu pandemic that is a widespread epidemic of a dangerous kind of flu this winter? Would you say you were very concerned, just concerned, not very concerned, or not at all concerned about the possibility of an outbreak?”

Just over half of those who responded (53%) were at least “concerned” about a flu pandemic this winter, while 22% expressed the feeling that they were “very concerned” there would be a flu pandemic.

Next, respondents were asked if they thought the state of Maryland was doing enough to prepare for a flu pandemic. Results were just about evenly split among the three responses; 39% believed the state was making sufficient preparation, 37% did not believe the state was sufficiently prepared for a flu pandemic, and 37% did not know. Given the relatively high rate of concern among Maryland citizens, there is an opportunity for the state to address this issue further.

Survey participants were then asked where they would turn for information during a public health emergency such as a flu pandemic.



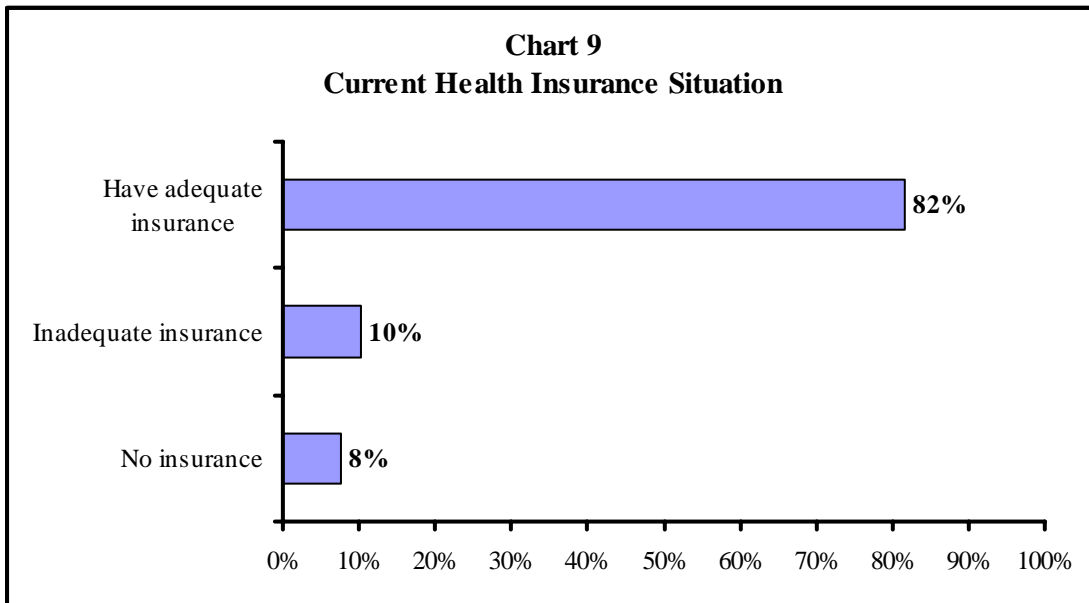
“During a public health related emergency such as a flu pandemic where would you turn for information?”

Not surprisingly the response most often given was “my doctor.” The majority of respondents (52%) would turn to the mass media for information during a health crisis. Although ‘Public Health Offices’ saw only 8% of respondents relying on them as a source of information during a health crisis, it is important to remember that public health offices use the media as the vehicle to deliver their information during such a crisis.

HEALTH INSURANCE IN MARYLAND

Survey respondents mentioned “health care” more often than any other legislative priority for 2006. There is also considerable sentiment for higher spending for health care related services in the next year. As stated earlier in the report, 62% felt the need for higher spending on medical assistance to the poor, with the largest amount of support for spending increases (70%) going to prescription benefits for the elderly.

The next series of questions asked respondents about their health care and the health care of others in our Maryland.

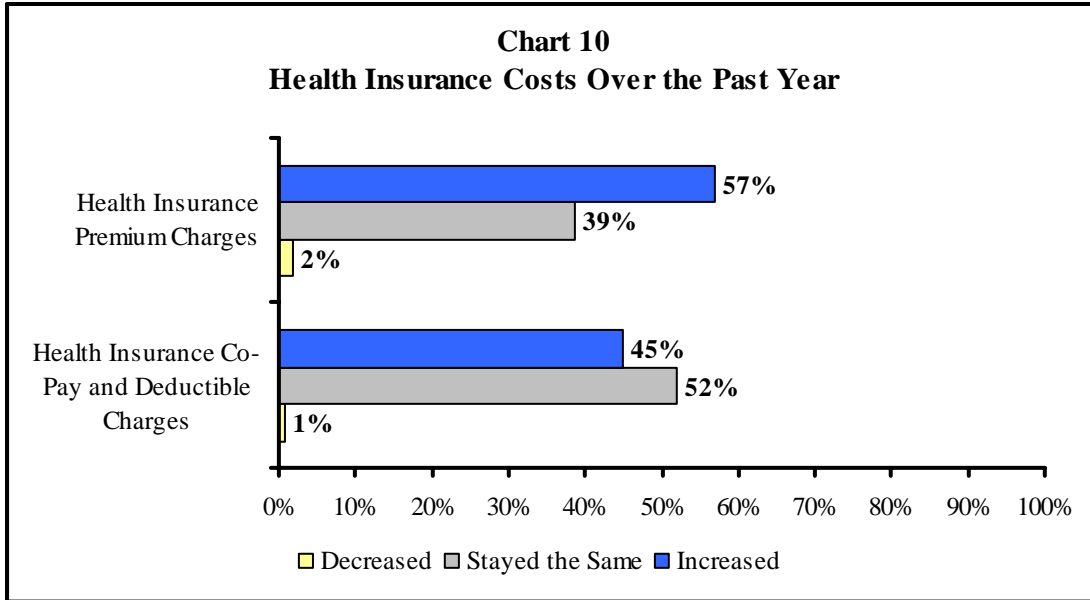


“Which of the following best describes your current health insurance situation?”

Lack of adequate health insurance continues to be a problem in Maryland, with 18% of the respondents indicating that they had inadequate or no health insurance. Individuals who did not graduate high school are twice as likely to have no insurance when compared to those who have a high school education or GED (26% to 13%).

Over the past 18 months, 16% of the respondents have either lost their health care insurance or had their coverage significantly reduced. Twenty-one percent (21%) of the respondents indicated they, not their employer, paid the full cost of their health care insurance.

Those who had insurance were asked if premiums or co-payments for insurance had changed over the past 12 months.

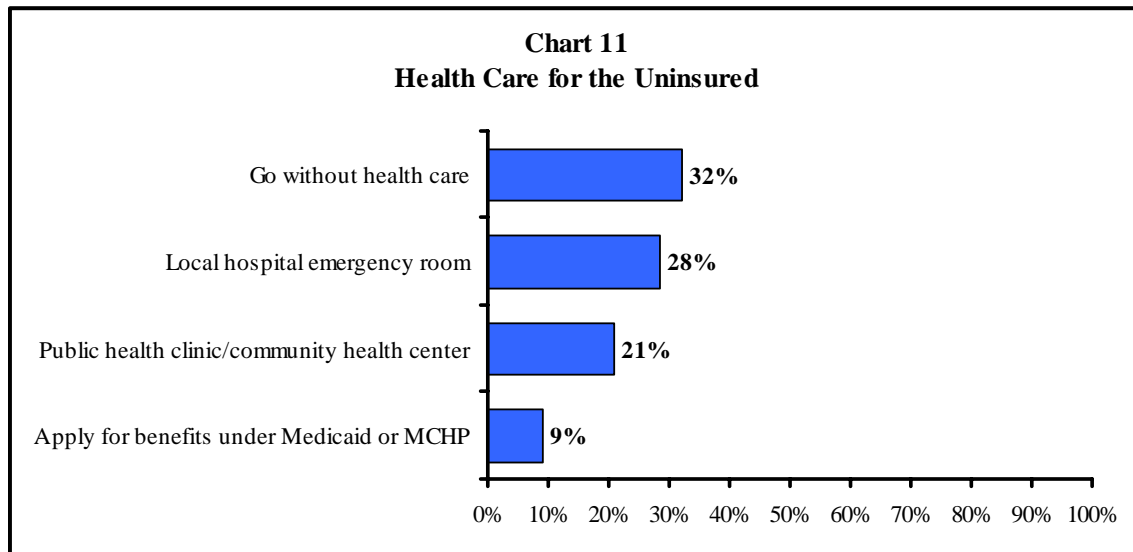


“Has your share of the premiums for your insurance increased, decreased or stayed the same over the past 12 months?”

“What about your co-payments and deductibles, have they increased, decreased or stayed the same over the past 12 months?”

The survey reflects the rising cost of health insurance and the trend toward increased cost-sharing by individuals for their health insurance. Fifty-seven percent of respondents reported increases in their health insurance premiums, and 45% indicated that their health insurance co-payments and deductibles had increased.

The health insurance environment in Maryland was believed to be adverse for families that do not have health insurance.



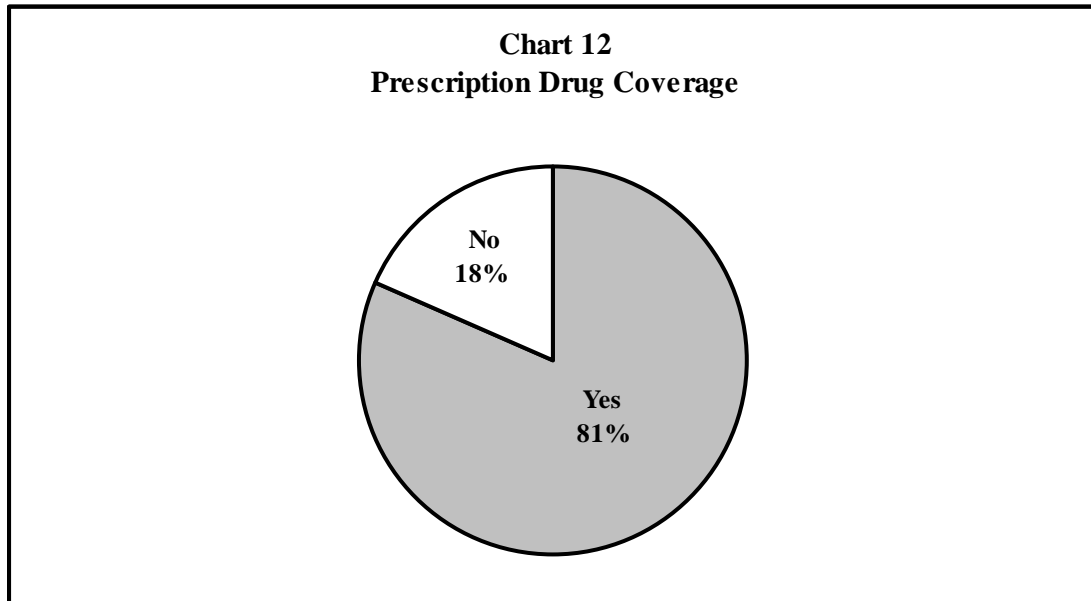
“For the millions of individuals and families that have no health care insurance, how do you think that they receive their healthcare?”

Overall, thirty-two percent of the respondents thought that the uninsured would simply go without health care. Examined separately, the responses of those who were identified as not having any health insurance are quite different. Fifty-five percent (55%) of those who had no healthcare insurance said that the uninsured would go without health care at all. Attention should be given to the problem of people not seeking health care when losing insurance or not being able to afford health care. These families and individuals place themselves at great risk when they forego health care.

The problem of no insurance and underinsurance for Maryland citizens remains a highly significant one. Some national projections indicate that the number of uninsured will grow from 44 million to 55 million in the next several years as health insurance costs continue to rise and as such costs continue to outstrip personal income growth.² The result will be a less healthy population and serious losses to the national and Maryland economy.

PRESCRIPTION DRUG COVERAGE AND COVERAGE COSTS

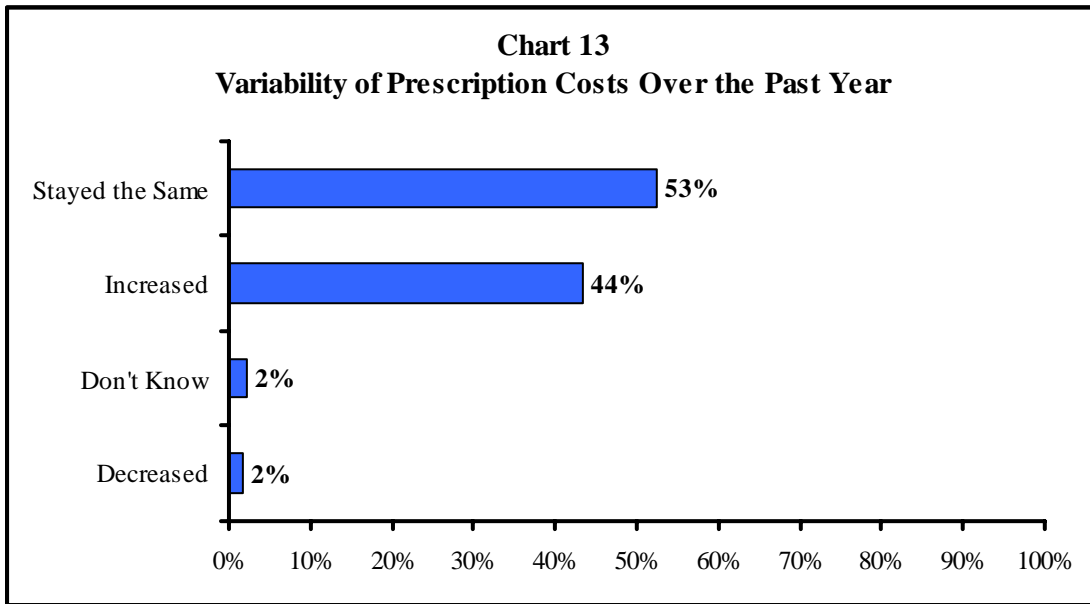
Prescription drug coverage and costs have been a central part of politics and a concern for citizens for well over a decade. In order to better understand how these issues impact Marylanders, five different prescription related questions were posed to survey respondents.



“Do you have prescription drug coverage?”

Although a majority of Marylanders may have prescription drug coverage, a sizeable minority (18%) do not. Sixty-percent (60%) of those who stated they have a prescription drug plan also stated that the costs of the plan were “fixed” costs, while 34% stated the costs were a percentage of the total amount – meaning that their financial risk and out of pocket payments rise with the cost of pharmaceuticals products.

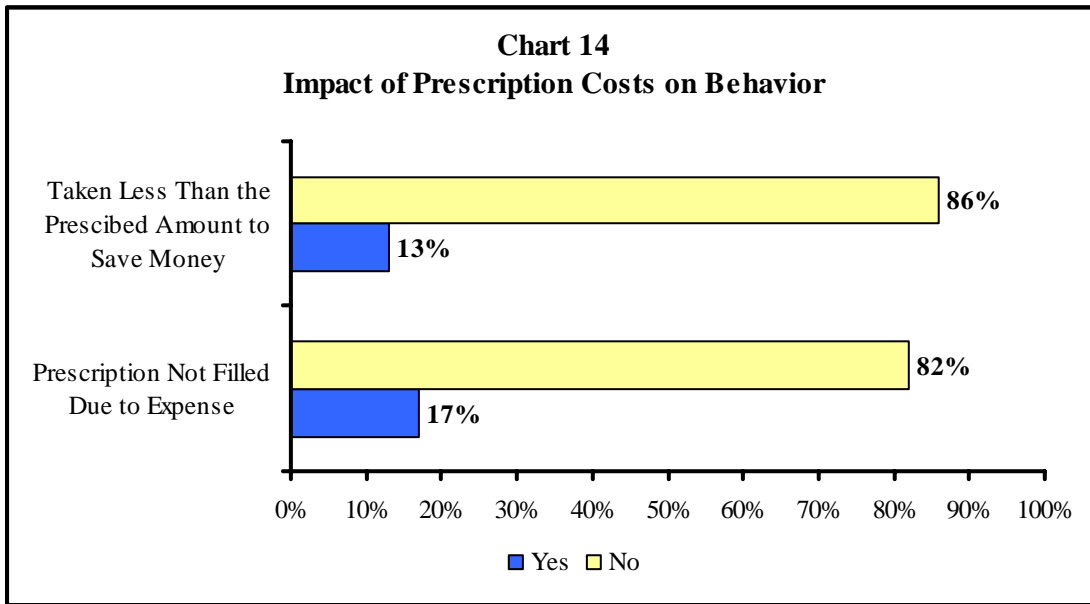
As with general health care coverage, many of those surveyed have seen the costs associated with their prescription drug plan increase over this past year.



“Has your share of your prescription costs increased, decreased, or remained the same over the past year?”

Although a majority of the respondents (53%) stated that their share of prescription cost for medications has stayed the same over the past year, a large minority (44%) state that they have seen their share of these costs increase in a one-year period. The cumulative impact of continued increases may place prescription products beyond the reach of more individuals.

In order to get an idea of how prescription costs may impact behavior respondents were asked two additional questions concerning prescription medications.

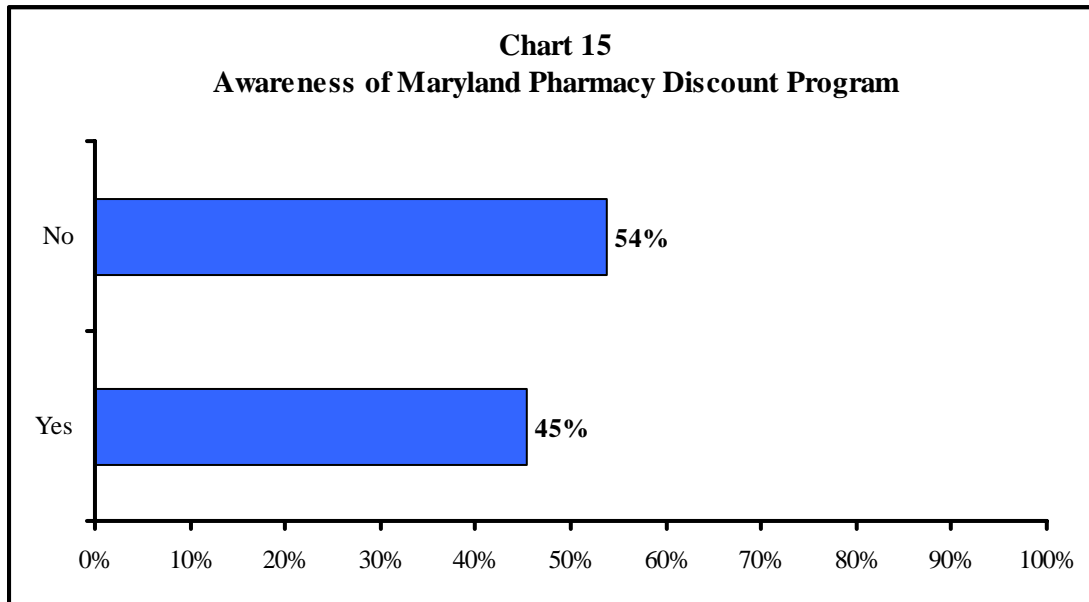


<i>“During the past year, have you ever taken less than the prescribed amount of a prescription drug to save money?”</i>	<i>“During the past year, have you ever not had a prescription filled because, you thought you could not afford it?”</i>
--	--

Overall, it would appear as though a vast majority of respondents do not allow the costs of their medications to impact their behavior, however, as with health insurance, the rising costs of prescription drugs continues to be a serious public policy problem in Maryland. Cost increases for drug coverage are not uncommon. Yet more importantly rising costs from increased premiums and co-pays are forcing some citizens to either eliminate needed dosages (13%) of their drugs or to forgo taking prescribed drugs altogether (17%).

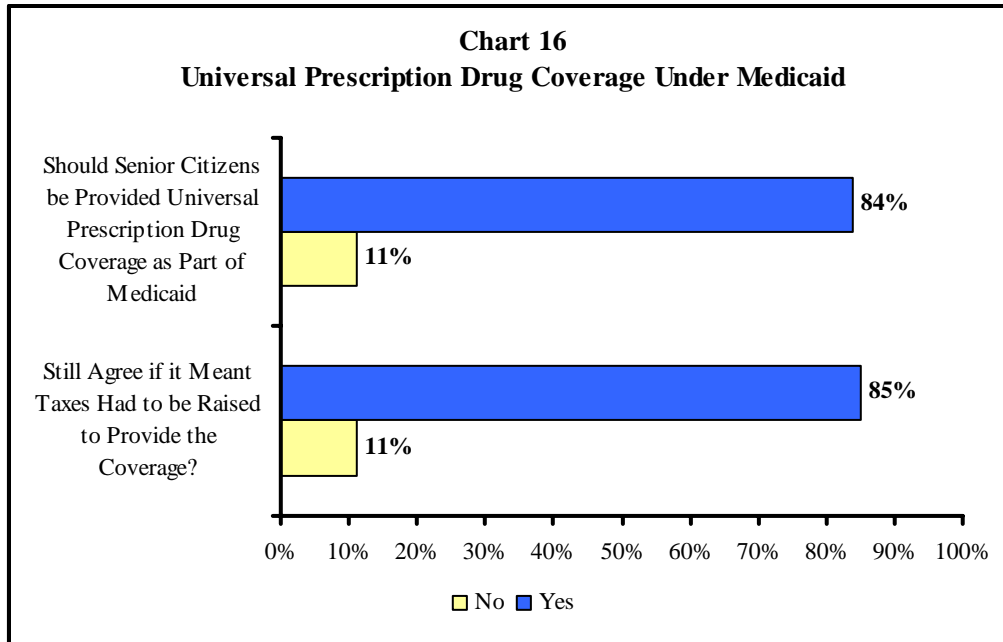
SENIOR CITIZENS AND PRESCRIPTION COVERAGE

In 2006, the first of America's 78 million 'baby boomers' will become senior citizens. The prevalence of diabetes, hypertension, heart disease and other chronic diseases increases with age. In addition, hypertension and obesity have been increasing over time in this group.³ These facts along with the general rise in prescription medicine costs point to an ever increasing challenge both for our senior citizens and for our policymakers. The next series of questions posed to respondents dealt with this issue.



“Are you aware of the Maryland Pharmacy Discount Program for seniors?”

Less than half (45%) of respondents were aware of the Pharmacy Discount Program. Those respondents who reported they were at least 65 years old are slightly more aware of the program than the population as a whole, with 59% responding that they are aware of Maryland's program.

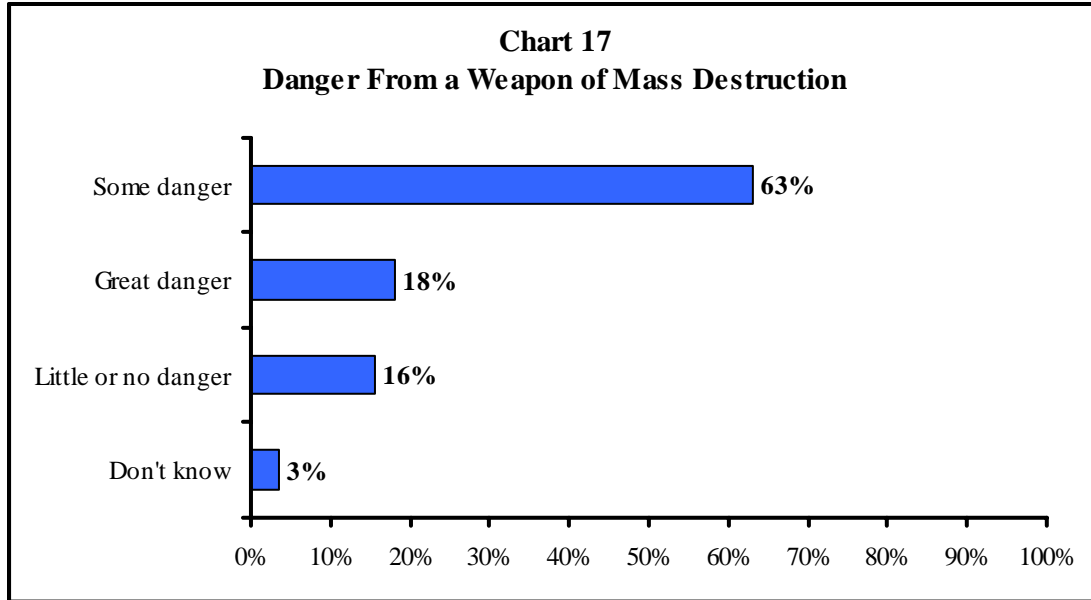


<i>“Do you think senior citizens should be provided universal prescription drug coverage as a part of Medicaid?”</i>	<i>“Would you still agree if it meant your taxes had to be raised to provide the additional coverage?”</i>
--	--

An overwhelming majority (84%) of respondents believe that senior citizens should be provided universal prescription drug coverage as part of Medicaid. An even higher percent (85%) stated that seniors should still be provided with drug coverage even if it meant taxes had to be raised.

TERRORISM

More than four years after September 11th there is a continued sense of vulnerability from terrorists attacking the United States using a weapon of mass destruction (WMD).

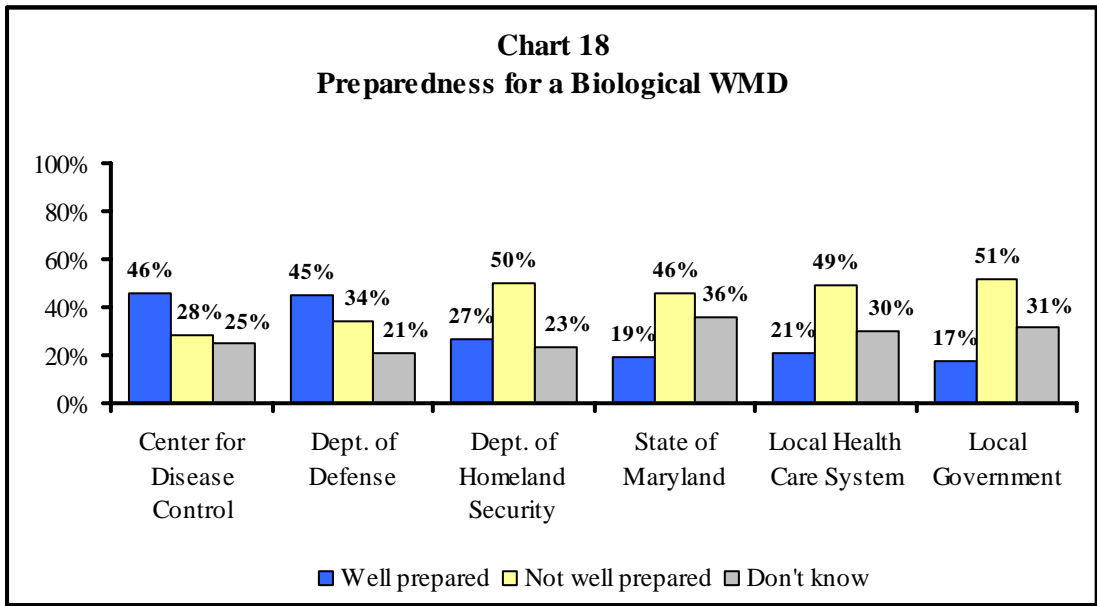


“There is growing public concern about the use of a weapon of mass destruction being used by terrorists in attacking this country. Which of the following comes closest to your view of the threat.”

Eighty-one percent (81%) of respondents believed that the United States is in at least some danger of a WMD attack. This percentage is slightly up from last year (78%), but falls within the margin of error for this survey. This year 18% of those surveyed believed we are in “great” danger from such an attack, down 2 points from last year, again however, within the margin of error.

On a local level, when the respondents were asked if they thought the Maryland state government was doing enough to prevent a terrorist attack, 44% thought that the state was “doing all it could” to reasonably prevent a terrorist attack, while 41% were of the opinion that Maryland “should do more” to help prevent terrorist attacks. There was a relatively small percentage (14%) of respondents who replied they “did not know” if Maryland was doing enough to prevent a terrorist attack.

Perhaps the most disturbing survey finding was public opinion about governmental preparedness in the event of a biological weapons attack.



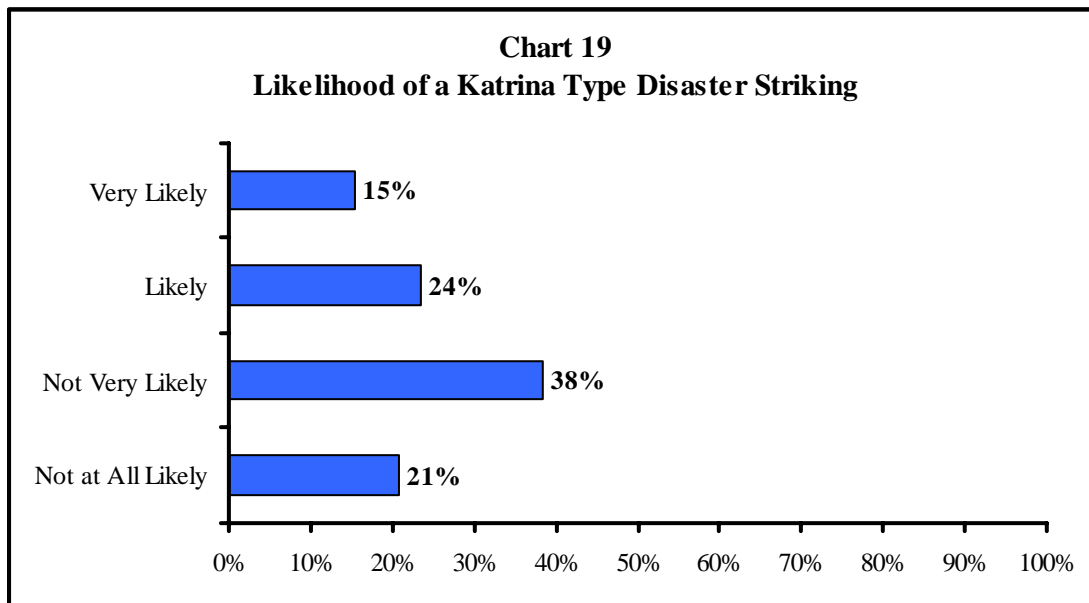
“If we were to experience a release of a biological weapon of mass destruction who would be prepared to protect us from the damage caused. From the following, tell me whether you think each is well prepared to deal with the damage or not well prepared.”

Between 28% and 51% of the survey respondents did not feel various governmental institutions were well prepared to defend against or mitigate a bio-terrorist attack. No governmental institution received a majority of respondents feeling that it was well prepared for a biological attack. At the same time, respondents also indicated a considerable lack of knowledge about bio-preparedness with between 21-36% of respondents indicating they did not know whether the various institutions were prepared to defend against a bio-terrorist attack.

The general population does not have great confidence or a good understanding of how the federal, state, and local governments are going to protect them in the event of an attack, especially a bio-terrorist attack. This feeling is especially evident in regarding perceptions of the local health care system and local governmental levels where the bulk of the “first response” to such a terrorist event would occur. Clearly there is a “communication gap” between the citizens and their respective governments about how a terrorist attack will be handled.

NATURAL DISASTERS

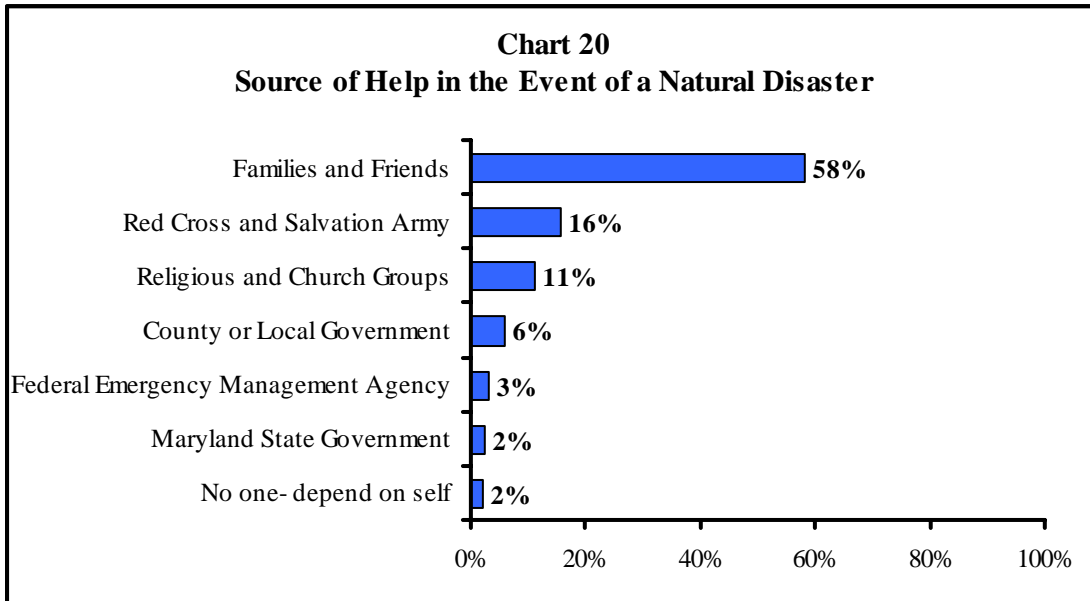
In August 2005, Hurricane Katrina slammed into the Gulf Coast states of Louisiana and Mississippi. The scenes of devastation and resulting tragic loss of life and property, along with what appeared to be an exceedingly poor response by local, state and federal officials to this natural disaster prompted three different questions about natural disaster preparation in Maryland.



“Last August, Hurricane Katrina devastated New Orleans and surrounding areas in Louisiana and Mississippi. How likely do you think it is that a similar natural disaster could strike where you live...Would you say very likely, just likely, not very likely, or, not likely at all?”

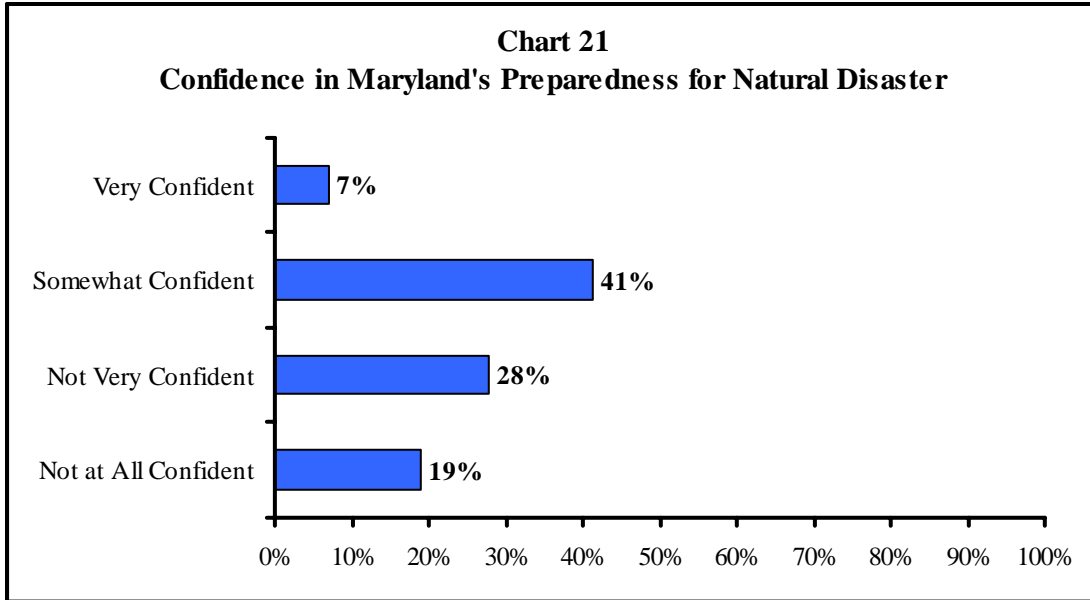
The majority of those surveyed (59%) did not think it was likely that a Katrina type disaster would strike in Maryland. However, there is still a sizeable minority (39%) who feel that such a disaster is at least “likely” to occur.

A natural disaster on the scale of Hurricane Katrina places enormous demands and strain on the disaster response infrastructure. Survey participants were asked who they thought they could count on most in the event of a natural disaster.



“If your community was impacted by a natural disaster like Hurricane Katrina, which of the following do you think you could count on most to help you and your family”

Not surprisingly, perhaps due to all of the controversy surrounding local, state and federal response to Katrina, only 11% of respondents thought they could count on any government entity for help. Most often cited were “families and friends” (58%) with non government organizations such as the Red Cross, Salvation Army and “religious and church groups” accounting for an additional 27% of responses.

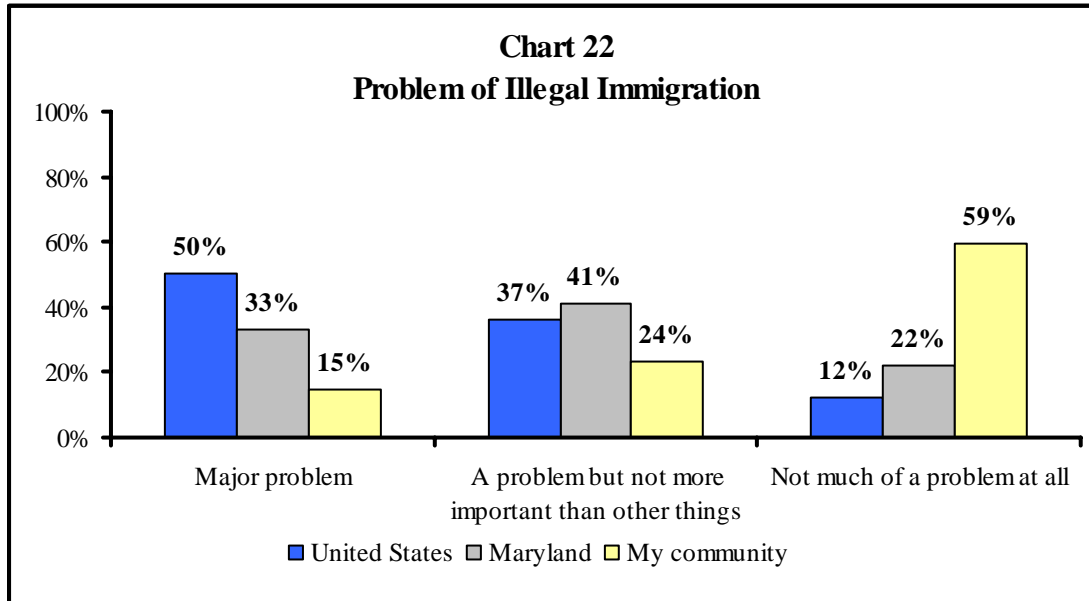


“How confident are you that the State of Maryland is well prepared to deal with a similar kind of natural disaster. Would you say very confident, somewhat confident, not very confident or not at all confident?”

These results show that 48% are at least “somewhat confident” in Maryland’s preparedness for a natural disaster. The results of this question are somewhat surprising given that only 2% of the respondents believe they could count on Maryland to help them in a natural disaster. The difference may lie in the interpretation of the question with respondents perhaps feeling the state is prepared to keep itself running/operating, but may not be in a position to help its’ citizens.

ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION

There has been an increasing concern that illegal immigration into this country may pose economic, social, and national security risks. This section of our survey asked six questions relating to immigration issues.

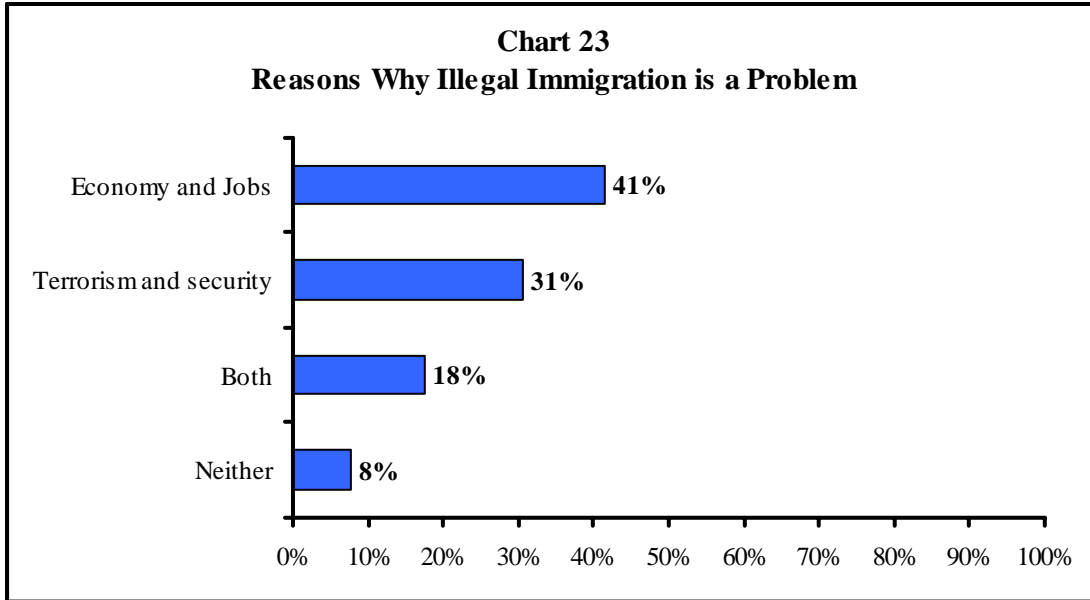


“How big a problem do you think illegal immigration is for (the United States, Maryland, your community)... Would you say it is a major problem, a problem but not more critical than other problems, or not much of a problem at all?”

Marylanders believe that the problem of illegal immigration is one that has a greater impact on areas other than their own. For the most part answers were uniform across demographics (region, education, income) except for respondents on the Eastern Shore and to a lesser extent, respondents in the DC Metropolitan Area. These two regions were much more likely to identify immigration as a “major problem” in their communities than respondents in the rest of the state:

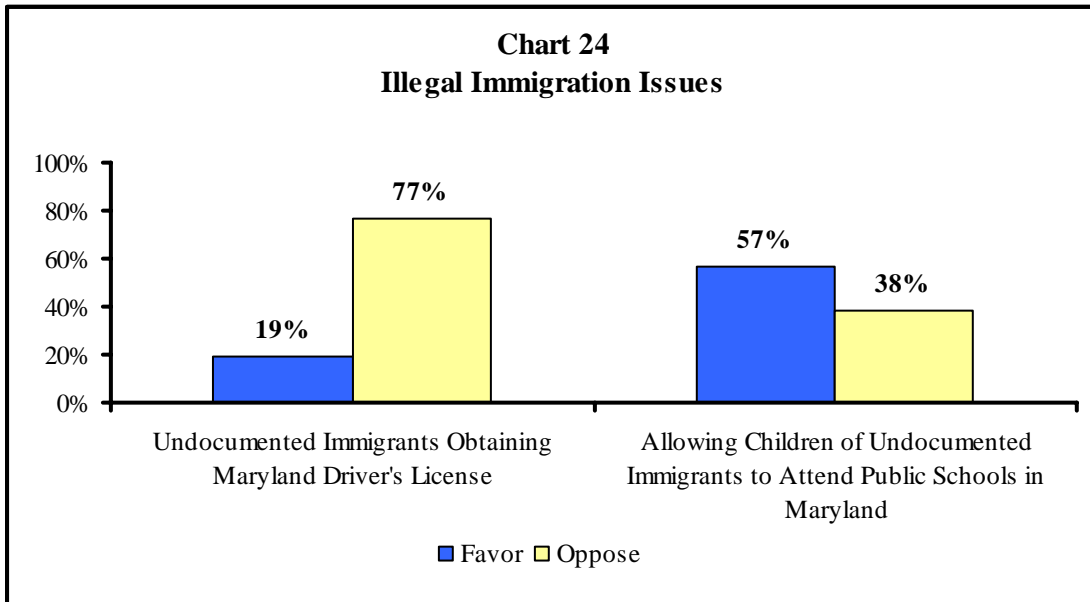
Table 2
Immigration is a Major Problem in my Community

Eastern Shore	28%
Washington, DC Metropolitan Area	18%
Baltimore Metropolitan Area	12%
Western Maryland	12%
Southern Maryland	11%
Baltimore City	10%



“Is the reason you see illegal immigration as a problem based more on concerns about jobs and the economy or based more on concerns about terrorism and homeland security?”

The largest percentage of respondents (41%) cited concerns about the economy and jobs as the reason why illegal immigration is a problem in Maryland. Concerns about terrorism and security were not far behind with 31% of respondents citing these factors as problematic.



“Would you favor or oppose allowing undocumented immigrants to obtain Maryland Driver's licenses?”

“Would favor or oppose allowing the children of undocumented immigrants to attend public schools in Maryland?”

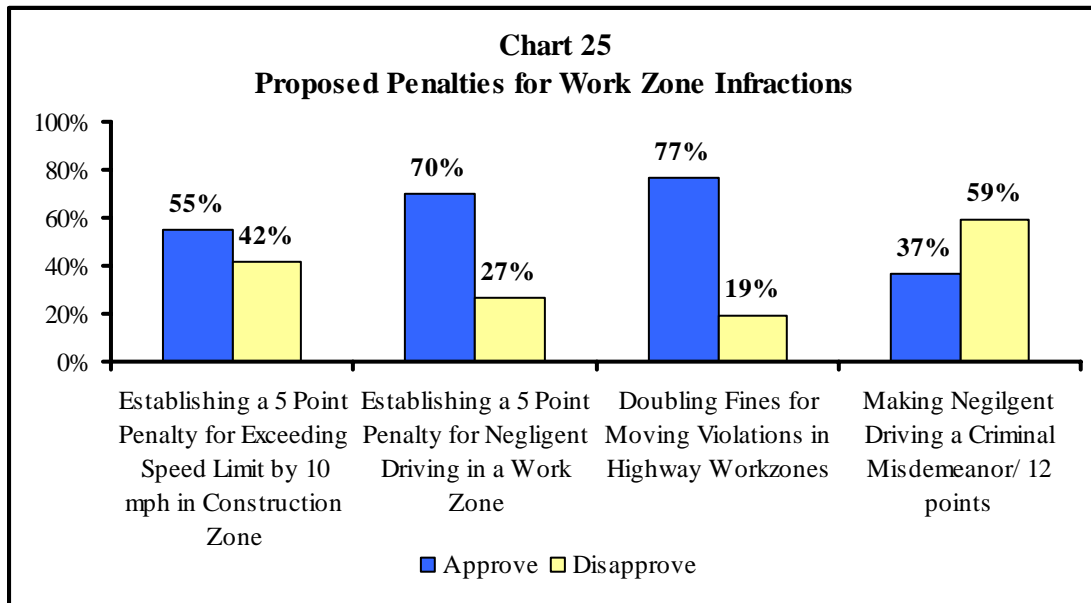
A vast majority of Marylanders (77%) do not believe that illegal immigrants should be allowed to obtain a Maryland Driver's License. A similar percentage (71%) believed that proof of U.S. Citizenship should be required to obtain a Maryland Driver's License. Interestingly enough, 57% favor allowing the children of illegal immigrants to attend Maryland Public Schools.

When asked if Maryland was doing enough about illegal immigration, a slight majority (53%) did not feel Maryland was doing enough. Twenty-five percent were satisfied with Maryland's performance in this area and 23% did not know if Maryland was doing enough about illegal immigration.

HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION ZONE SAFETY

Maintaining and improving the road and highway system in Maryland is an ongoing, never ending process. As Maryland's population expands, and its infrastructure ages, the need for highway construction and maintenance increases each year. Safety in these construction zones is a continual challenge for construction workers, law enforcement officers and commuters. Most people would probably assume that the greatest danger in the work zones is to the construction workers themselves, but according to the Maryland State Highway Administration "four out of five people killed in work zones are not workers – but motorists or passengers."⁴

The next section of the survey dealt with a certain proposals that pertain to safety in roadway work zones.

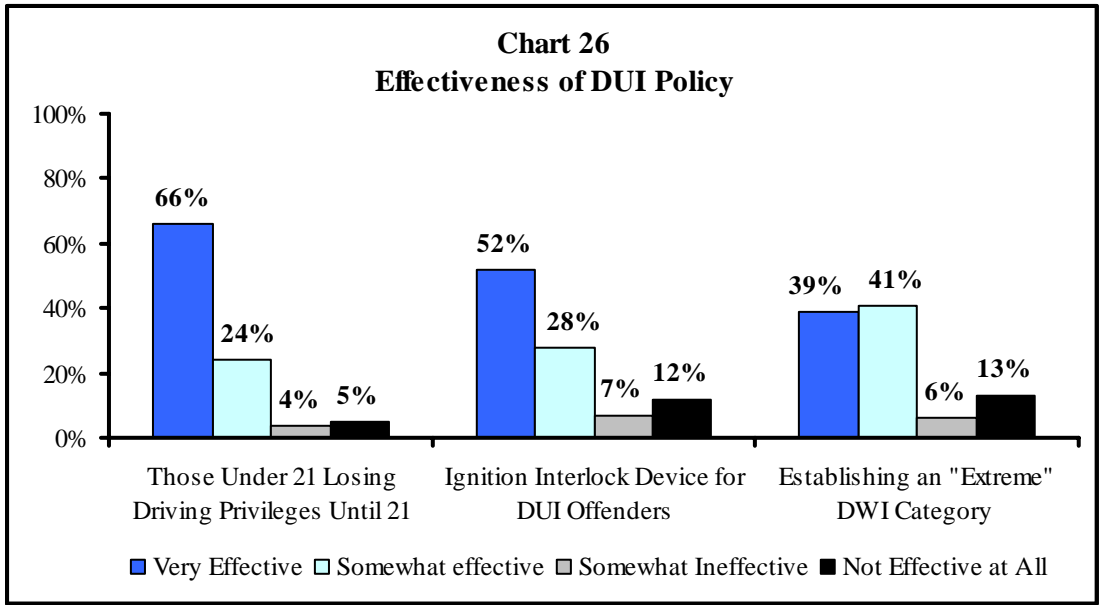


"There has been a lot of discussion recently about safety in areas where highway construction is taking place. I am going to read you a few proposals related to safety in roadway work zones. For each, please tell me if you would approve or disapprove of the proposal."

Survey respondents overwhelmingly approve (70%) of a 5-point penalty for negligent driving in a highway work zone, as well as doubling the fines for moving violations in a work zone (77%). To a much lesser degree (55% approval) there is support for a 5-point penalty for exceeding the speed limit by 10 mph in a construction zone. Respondents appear to have drawn the line at mandatory criminal charges combined with a 12-point penalty. In this instance, a majority of respondents (59%) did not approve of this proposed penalty.

PROPOSED DRIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE LAWS AND POLICIES

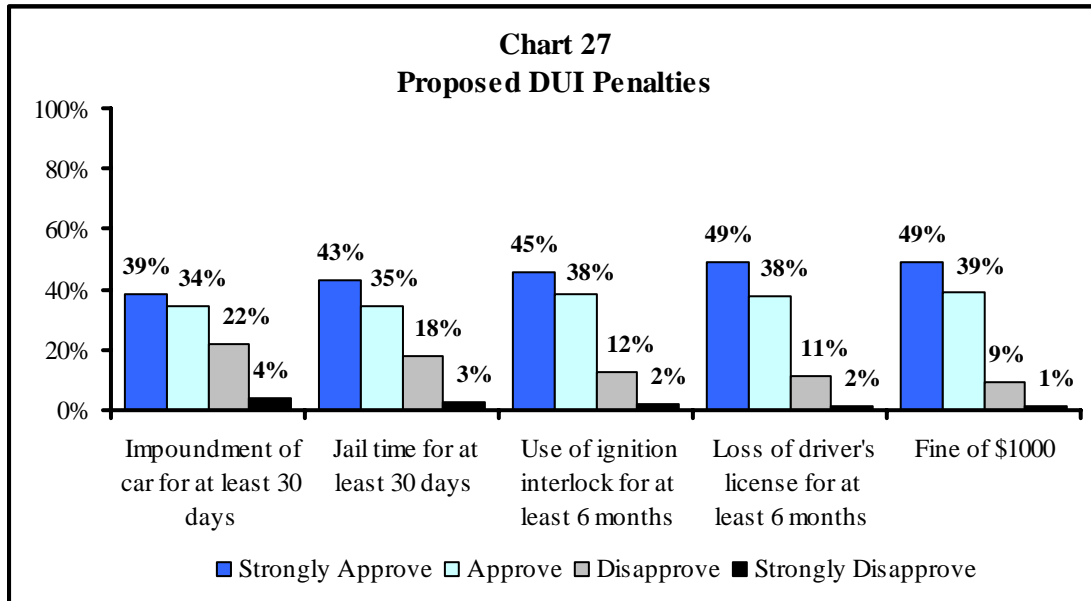
In November 2005 the physician-led traffic safety advocacy group called “End Needless Death on Our Roadways” (END), and the National Safety Council announced their annual list of the fifteen deadliest states in the country for impaired driving. The “Fatal Fifteen” are states in which 41 percent or more of all traffic fatalities are alcohol related.⁵ Maryland had the dubious honor of ranking 9th on this list. In the next section of the survey, respondents were asked for their opinion about specific proposals aimed at combating DUI in Maryland.



“For each of the following, please tell how effective you think each would be in preventing people from driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol. For each, use the scale Very effective, Somewhat effective, Somewhat ineffective, and Not Effective at all.”

A large majority of respondents viewed all the DUI – related policies as being at least “somewhat effective”. The strongest support was found for those under 21 years of age losing driving privileges with a majority (66%) feeling this policy would be “very effective.” Fifty-two percent (52%) of respondents felt that the use of an ignition interlock device for first time DUI or DWI offenders would be “very effective.” Although the proposed policy of establishing an “extreme DWI” category (for people with blood alcohol levels of .15, about twice the current legal limit) did not find as much support a full 80% of respondents still felt this policy would be at least “somewhat effective.”

The next few question asked respondents about possible penalties for repeat DUI/DWI offenders.

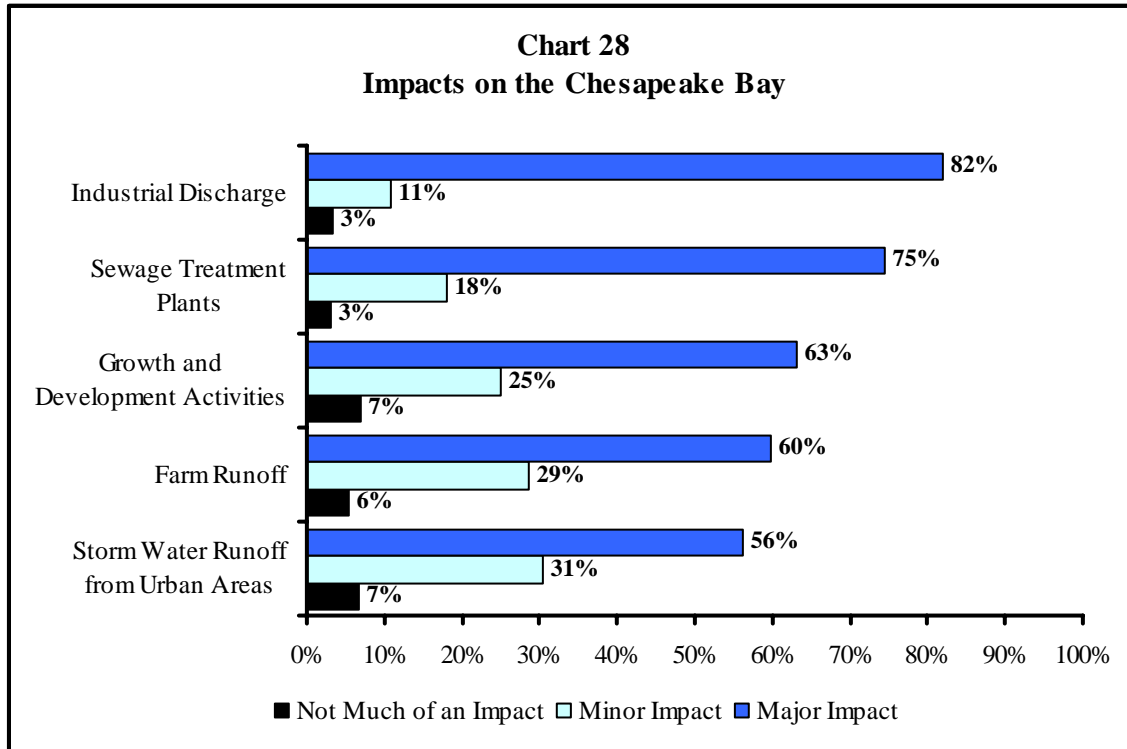


“The next few questions have to do with possible penalties for impaired driving repeat offenders. For each item, please tell me if you strongly approve, approve, disapprove, or strongly disapprove.”

Once again, there was strong support among Marylanders for stricter DUI/DWI laws. Although none of the proposed penalties received an outright majority of respondents “strongly approving” of the penalties, every one of the proposed DUI penalties had a vast majority of the respondents stating they at least “approved” (ranging between 72-88%) of the penalties. There is, however, significantly less support for impounding a car belonging to a DUI offender for at least 30 days. This penalty received the lowest “strong approval” rating at 39%, and received the highest “disapproval” rating at 26%.

THE CHESAPEAKE BAY

The Chesapeake Bay plays an important part in the economic and recreational vitality of our state. Surveyed participants were read a list of possible threats to the Chesapeake Bay and asked to classify their potential impact on the Bay.

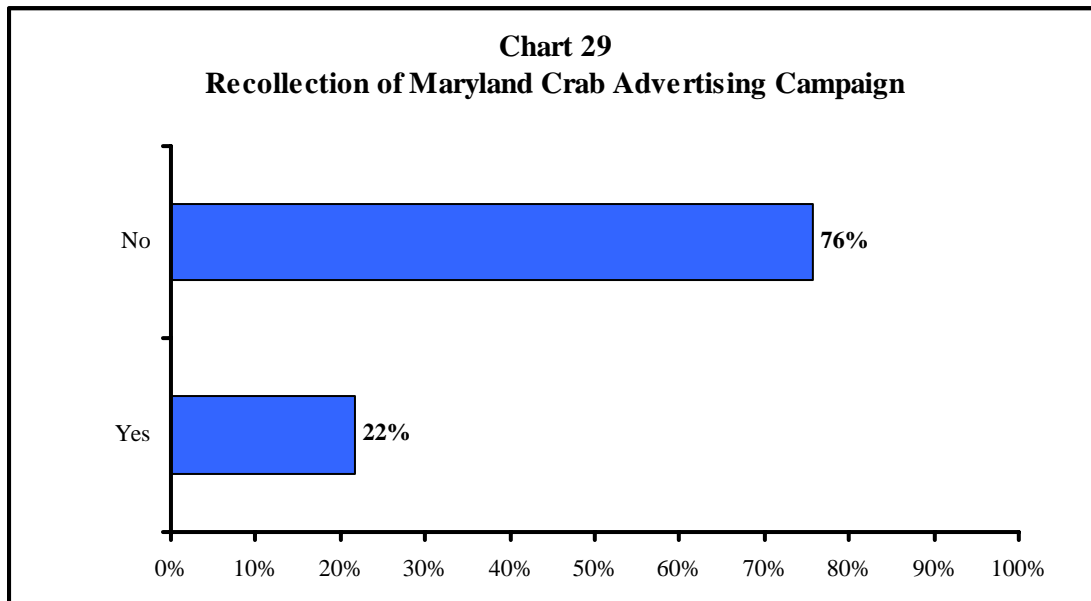


“Next, I’m going to read you a list of possible threats to the Chesapeake Bay. For each, please tell me if you think if it has a major impact, a minor impact, or not much of an impact at all on the health of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries.”

A vast majority (75-80%) of the respondents identified industrial discharge and sewage treatment as posing the most serious threats to the health of the Bay. A large percentage of respondents (56-60%) also perceived farm run off, growth and development, and storm run off from urban areas as possible threats. These percentages, however, are still significantly lower than the percentages for industrial discharge and sewage treatment plants.

The results of the survey demonstrate that Maryland residents are sensitive to the various ecological pressures that face the Chesapeake Bay. Whether or not Maryland citizens fully understand how these various aspects interact with one another and the environment is less clear.

In the past year, the state of Maryland ran an advertising campaign touting Maryland crabs and crab meat. Respondents were first asked if they recalled seeing any of these ads.

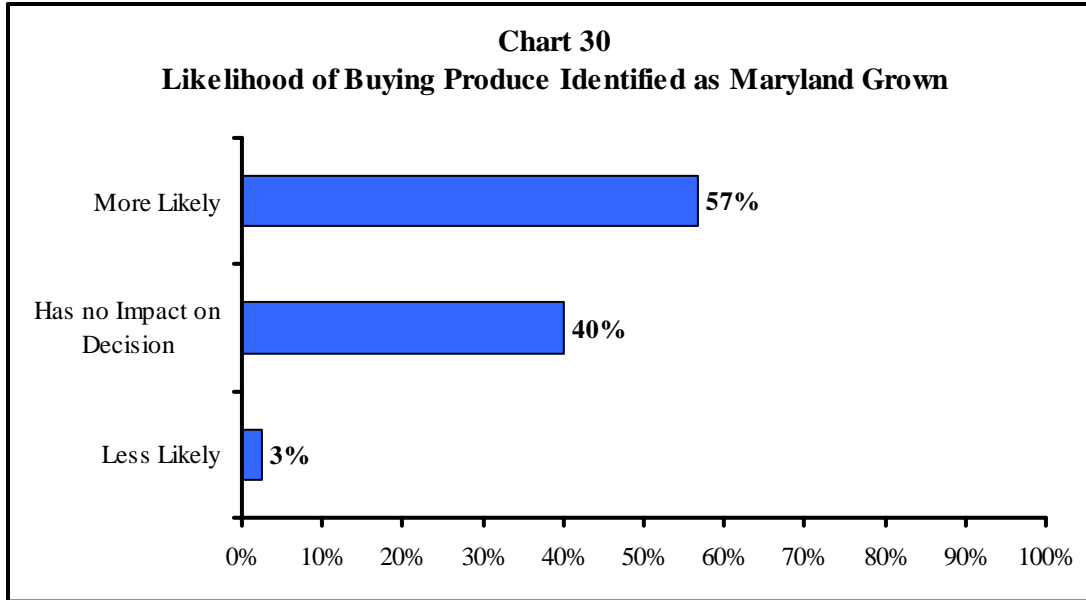


“Recently, The State of Maryland advertised Maryland crab and crabmeat on television and in newspapers. Do you recall seeing any of these ads?”

Although a majority of respondents (76%) did not recall any of these ads on 22% of the respondents did recall those ads. Those who recalled the ads were next asked if they purchased Maryland crabs or crab meat as a result of those ads. Twenty-seven percent (27%) of those who stated they had seen the ads said they were moved to purchase Maryland crabs or crabmeat as a result of those ads.

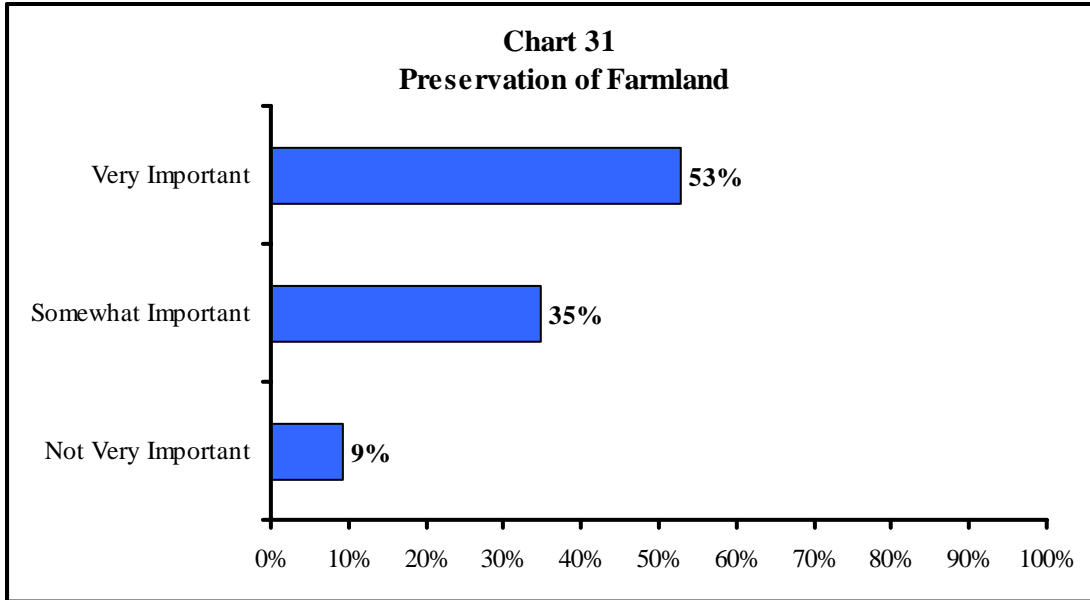
MARYLAND AGRICULTURE

The role of the Maryland farmer in our economy and the importance of farmland preservation are reflected in the behavior and attitudes of most Marylanders.



“If you see fresh fruits or vegetables in your local grocery store that is identified as having been grown by a Maryland farmer are you more likely to purchase it, less likely to purchase it, or does this have no impact on your decision?”

A majority of Marylanders are more likely to buy produce that is identified as being Maryland Grown. Maryland farmland however is more than just fruits, corn, and other home grown products for us to enjoy. Respondent’s answers indicate that there is perhaps another dimension to the role of farmers and farmland in our state. Chart 31 on the following page touches on that dimension.



“How important do you think it is for the state to preserve land for farming?”

Eighty-eight percent (88%) of those surveyed believed it is at least “somewhat important” that the state preserve land for farming. A full 53% believe it is “very important” that Maryland does so. The reasons behind these attitudes have not been measured. Whatever the reasons are, we do know that Marylanders believe that farms and the products they produce should remain part of our culture and economy.

SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS

Table 3		
Gender	Male	48%
	Female	52%
Race		
Race	White	69%
	Black	24%
	Hispanic	1%
	Other	4%
	Refused	2%
Education		
Education	< than High School	5%
	High School Grad/GED	23%
	Some College/Tech School	27%
	College Graduate	24%
	Graduate or Professional School	22%
Party		
Party	Democrat	50%
	Republican	25%
	Independent	12%
	Not Registered	9%
	Other	1%
Ideology		
Ideology	Liberal	19%
	Moderate	22%
	Conservative	21%
	Don't think in those terms	37%
Income		
Income	<\$25K annual	12%
	\$25K to \$50K	22%
	\$50K to \$100K	33%
	>\$100K	20%
Region		
Region	Baltimore City	11%
	Baltimore Metro	37%
	DC Metro	26%
	Western MD	10%
	Southern MD	7%
	Eastern Shore	8%
Age		
Age	21 years to 30 years	8%
	31 years to 45 years	28%
	46 years to 54 years	24%
	55 years to 64 years	20%
	65 years and older	20%

ENDNOTES

1. U.S. Food and Drug Administration, “Flu Prevention 2004-2005: An Update” FDA Consumer Magazine, November-December 2004, retrieved from http://www.fda.gov/fdac/features/2004/604_flu.html, on January 16, 2005.
2. Todd Gilmer & Richard Kronick, “It’s the Premiums, Stupid: Projections of the Uninsured Through 2013”, Health Affairs: The Policy Journal of the Health Sphere, Web Exclusive, April 5, 2005, retrieved from www.healthaffairs.org.
3. National Center for Health Statistics, Health, United States, 2005, With Chartbook on Trends in the Health of Americans; Hyattsville, Maryland 2005, (pg 70).
4. Comments by Maryland Transportation Secretary Robert L. Flannagan, State Highway Administration News Release # 9290, (Save a Life and “Just Drive”) March 30, 2004.
5. National Safety Council, “Thirteen States Make Dubious Fatal Fifteen List for Two Years Straight” November 28, 2005, retrieved from <http://www.nsc.org/news/nr112805.htm>, on January 10, 2006



THE SCHAEFER CENTER FOR PUBLIC POLICY

20 years of excellence serving the government and nonprofit communities

The Schaefer Center for Public Policy

University of Baltimore

1304 St. Paul Street

Baltimore, Maryland 21202

www.scpp.ubalt.edu

410.837.6188