Maryland Policy Choices: 2009

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 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, education, 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.

Contributors

The 2009 Maryland Policy Choices 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; Mr. William Wells, Research Assistant; Dr. Simon Bauer-Leffler, Survey Research Manager; Ms. Mary Lovegrove, Assistant Director of the Schaefer Center; Ashleigh Crane and Matthew Shuman, Public Policy Fellows; and the Schaefer Center's professional CATI Lab survey interviewers; the Schaefer Center for Public Policy Graduate Fellows.

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MARYLAND POLICY CHOICES: 2009

During the period from December 4, 2008 through January 6, 2009, 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 2009 Legislative session.

SAMPLING

Surveyors telephoned and interviewed 800 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 +/- 3.46% at the 95% confidence level.

WEIGHTING

The relative proportion of males to females sampled was slightly less than that projected by the U.S. Census Department for 2007 in Maryland. The sample was actually comprised of thirty-six percent (36.1%) male respondents and sixty-four percent (63.6%) female respondents. To adjust this, the responses for all males and females were given appropriate weighting factors to bring them into line with the Census Bureau's population estimate of forty-eight percent (48.1%) males and fifty-two percent (51.8%) females. This is a standard statistical research practice and does not affect the validity of the survey results.

The results were also weighted by age. The median age of respondents was 53 years old. The U.S. Census estimates the median age of Maryland residents to be 37 years old. Age was collected as a number ranging from 21 to 110; responses were then recoded into U.S. Census age categories. The calculations used to determine weighting factors are presented in Appendix A of this document.

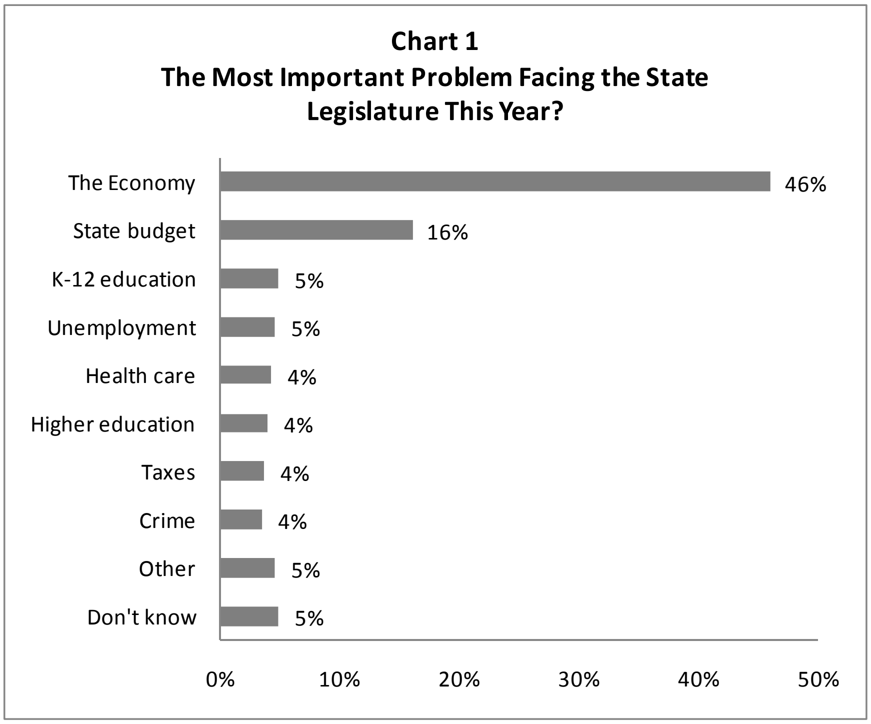
The final weights used for all analyses presented herein are the results of multiplying the two weights and assigning them to respondents. The resulting weights were created using the best statistical practices for the purpose of bringing the results in line with population characteristics of Maryland.

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 one hundred percent (100%).

GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES AND PERFORMANCE

The first question asked respondents to identify what they believed to be the single most important issue facing the Maryland State Legislature in 2009. 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[1].



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

The most obvious result is that the recent financial troubles top the rankings of most important problem the state legislature is facing this year. Forty-six percent (46%) of respondents listed the current economy as the biggest problem followed by the state budget at 16%. Few respondents ranked non-economic problems as the most important. Five percent of all respondents ranked K-12 education, unemployment, other issues and the Don't Know category as the most important problem facing the state legislature this year. Health care, higher education, taxes and crime all received 4%. In comparison to last year's opinion survey, the percentage of respondents ranking crime, health care and public education as important priorities was halved for

[1] This chart only shows the top seven issue areas with the highest percentage of responses. The other seven areas had percentages below the margin of error for the survey.

this year. The biggest change was taxes, which topped the list of problems in 2008 at 23% and dropped to 4% in 2009.

Respondents were read a randomized list of priorities for the State of Maryland and asked whether they thought the priority was "very important," "important," "somewhat important," or "not at all important." The results are presented in Table 1[2].

Table 1
Spending Priorities by Program Area

Program Area	***Very Important***	***Important***	***Somewhat Important***	***Not at all Important***
Developing & keeping jobs	85%	9%	5%	1%
Improving public education	82%	9%	7%	1%
Controlling crime	82%	12%	5%	1%
Protecting the public from terrorist attacks	70%	14%	11%	5%
Protecting the environment	69%	17%	11%	3%
Improving education at colleges and universities	59%	17%	17%	6%
Avoiding tax increases	52%	20%	23%	5%
Attracting new business	52%	23%	21%	5%
Managing growth & development	46%	25%	22%	6%
Lowering taxes	44%	17%	27%	12%
Preserving farmland	43%	26%	28%	4%
Improving public transportation	40%	23%	26%	10%
Building more or better roads	31%	29%	31%	9%
Reducing the size of government	27%	18%	29%	23%
Reinvesting in older communities	27%	32%	31%	8%
Revitalizing downtowns	21%	24%	34%	19%
Buying open space & parkland	18%	24%	31%	23%

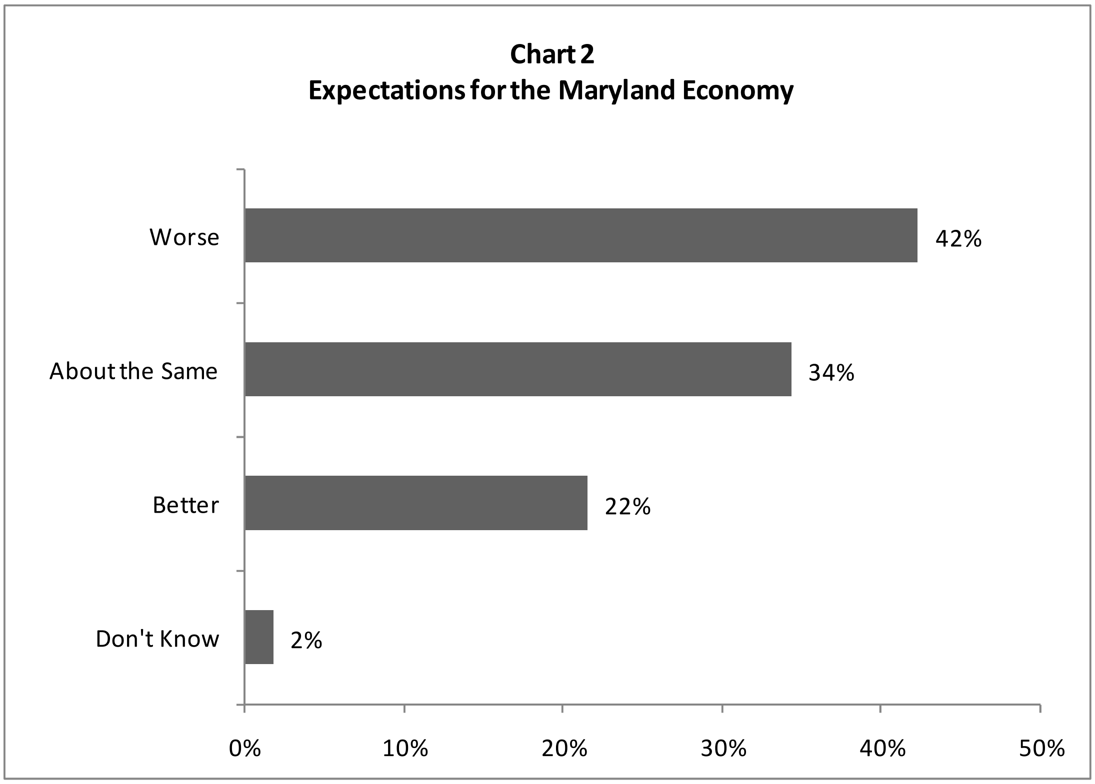
"I'm going to read you a short list of priorities for the state of Maryland. Please rate each of the following priorities by telling me if it is very important, just important, only somewhat important, or not important at all, to you."

Developing/keeping jobs (85%), improving public education (82%), and controlling crime (82%) were deemed "very important" priorities by a vast majority of respondents. Protecting the public from terrorist attacks (70%) and protecting the environment (69%) also received a majority of respondents who were of the opinion that these issues are "very important."

[2] The percentages for some program areas in Table 1 sum to less than 100% due to a few respondents answering that they had no opinion about the importance of that program area.

While the top five priorities have remained the same from last year, developing and keeping jobs rose to be identified as the most pressing priority, indicating that Marylanders are increasingly concerned about what the economic future holds. The number of respondents ranking improving public education as very important increased from 71% in 2008 to 82% in 2009.

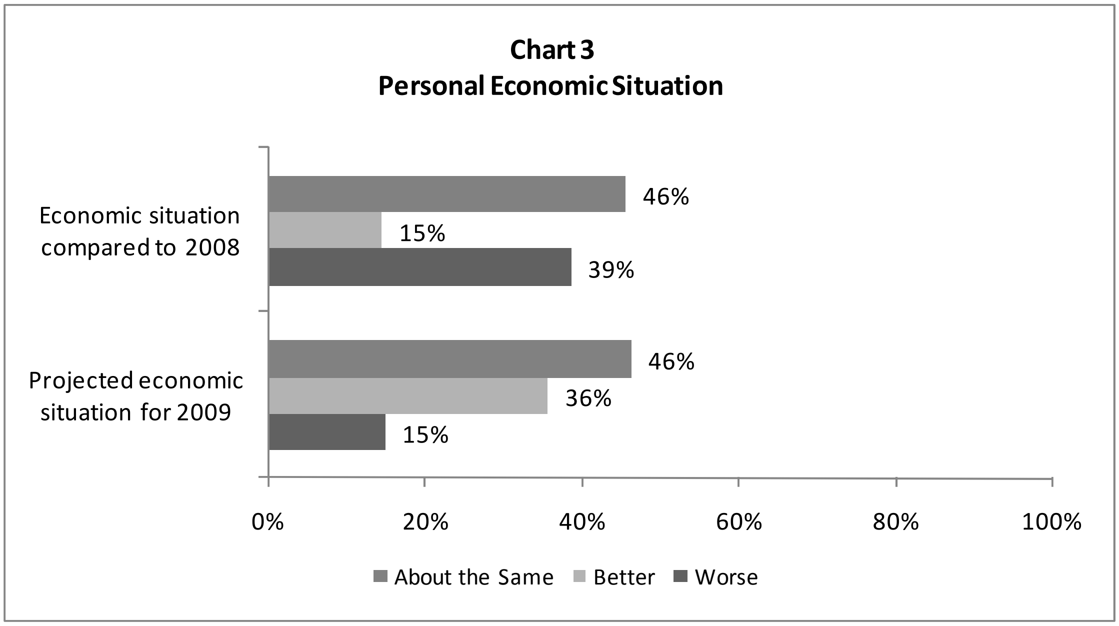
Respondents were asked if they thought the Maryland economy would get better, get worse, or stay about the same in 2009. Chart 2 shows that only a slim majority (56%) of those surveyed believed the Maryland economy would either stay the same or improve over the next year. This is similar to last year when 52% of respondents reported having these same opinions.



"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?"

Despite current economic worries, this year 22% of Marylanders indicated that they expect the Maryland Economy to improve. In 2008 only 11% of respondents indicated that they thought the Maryland economy would improve, suggesting that some Marylanders in 2009 are showing some optimism relative to current economic situations. However, the percentage of respondents who said the economy would get worse changed little in 2009 (42%) from 45% in 2008.

When asked about their personal economic situation this year and their expectations for their personal economic situation in the upcoming year, more respondents thought of themselves as worse off economically compared to 2008. In contrast respondents seemed more optimistic for 2009, as indicated in Chart 3[3].



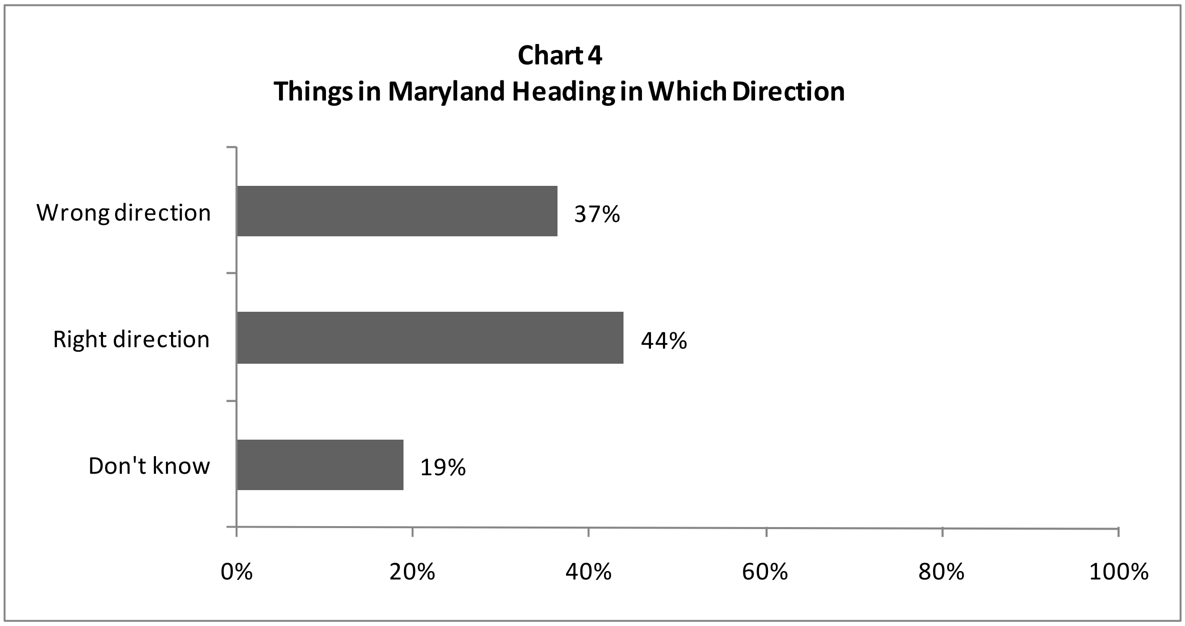
"What about your personal economic situation, are you better off, are you worse off, or do you think you are about the same as you were last year?"	*"Again, thinking about your personal economic situation, do you think you will be better off , worse off, or do you think you will be about the same a year from now?"*

A majority of respondents (59%) still believed that their own personal economic situation was either better or the same when compared to last year; however, 39% of respondents reported that their personal economic situation is "worse" than it was last year.

Respondents were slightly more optimistic about their economic situation in the next year. Thirty-six percent of respondents reported expecting to be better off financially in 2009.

[3] does not show the respondents who indicated that they "didn't know," and for this reason, the percentages for each aspect will not sum to 100%.

Respondents were asked again this year if they thought things in Maryland were headed in the right or wrong direction, and the results are shown in Chart 4.

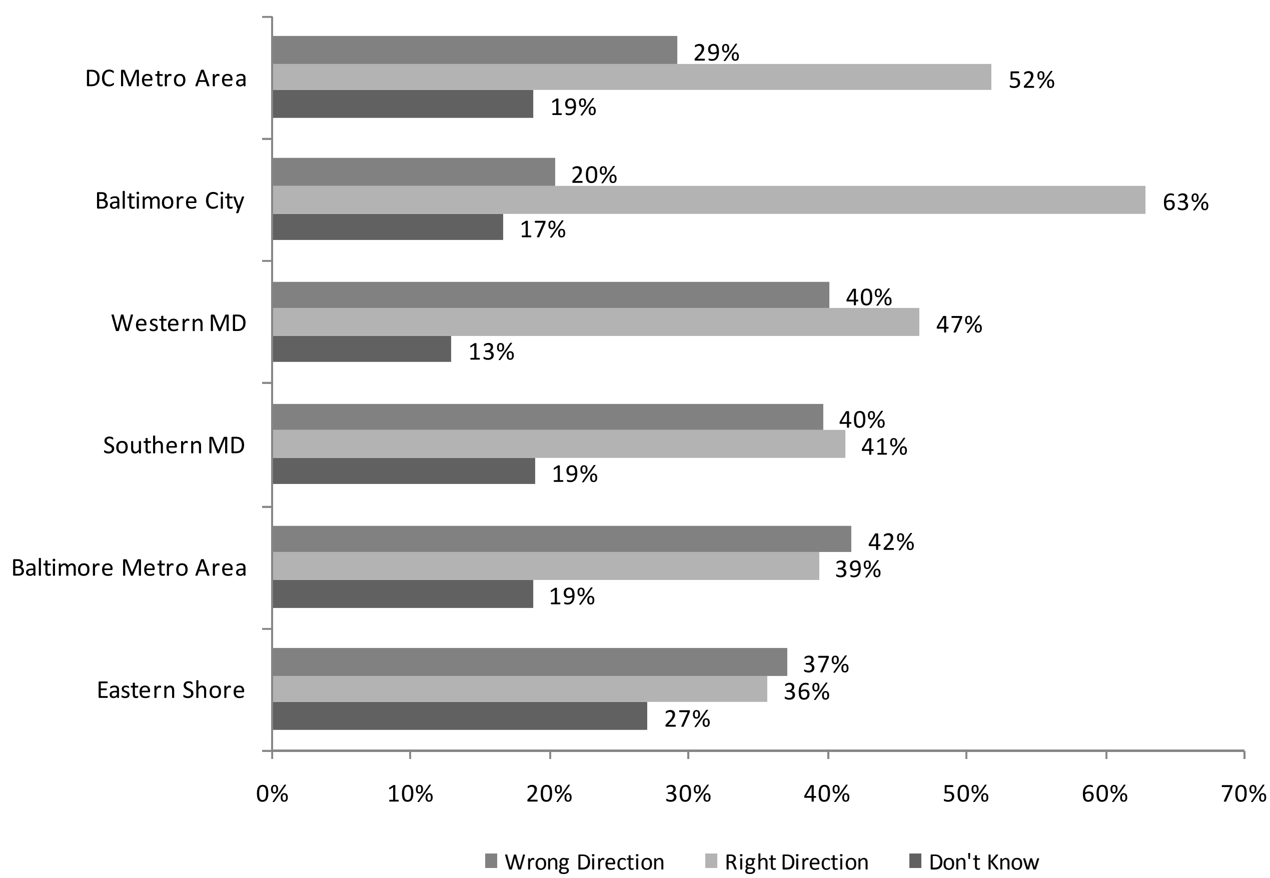


"Would you say things in Maryland today are generally headed in the right direction, or would you say things are headed in the wrong direction?"

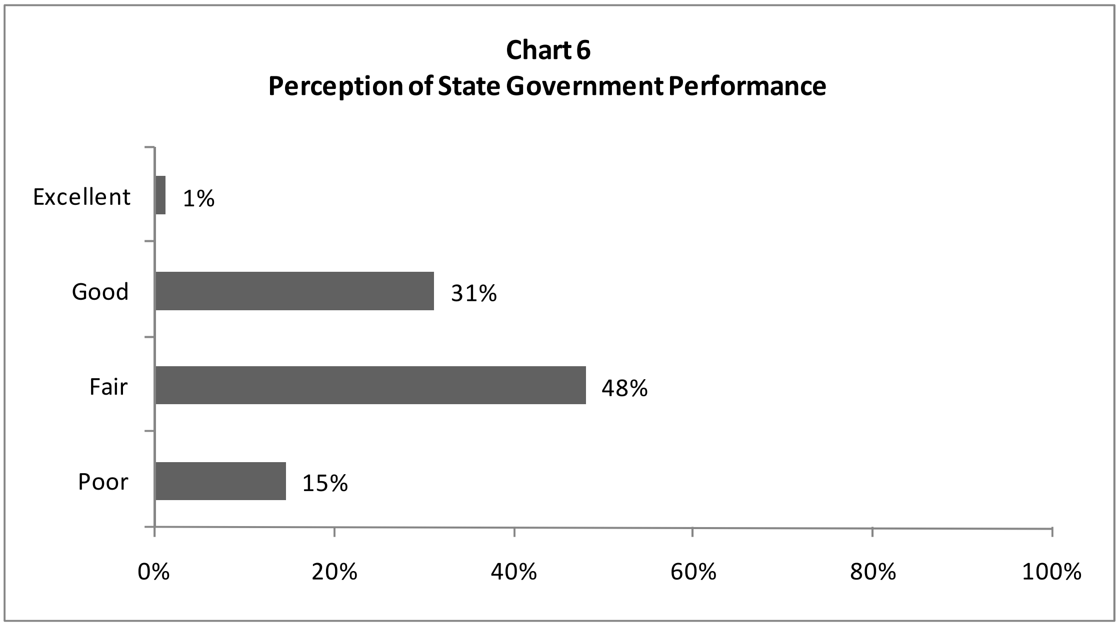
In a continuation of the optimistic opinions reported in the preceding questions, respondents abruptly changed their thinking this year on the way things are headed in the state. While last year just over a third of respondents (38%) indicated that Maryland was headed in the right direction, this year a little less than half of respondents indicated that they felt the state was headed in the right direction (44%) than in the wrong direction (37%). A slightly larger percentage (19%) of respondents indicated that they were unsure about the direction of things in the state this year as compared to last year at 14%.

There does seem to be a regional disparity in the way Marylanders who have an opinion view the direction in which the state is headed, as shown in Chart 5. All respondents who did not live in Baltimore City or the DC Metro Area were more likely to report that Maryland is heading in the "wrong direction." Those respondents in Western Maryland, Southern Maryland and the Baltimore Metro Area (excluding Baltimore City) most frequently reported that things are headed in the "wrong direction" (40%, 40% and 42%, respectively). More respondents in the DC Metro reported thinking that things were headed in the "right direction" (52%) than in the "wrong direction" (29%). Respondents in Baltimore City were the most positive about the direction Maryland is heading overall with well over 63% stating that things are heading in the "right direction". This indicates that there are significant regional differences in the way Marylanders view the direction in which the state is headed.

Chart 5
Heading in Which Direction by Area



Respondents were asked to rate the performance of state government in solving problems in Maryland, and the results are presented in Chart 6[4].



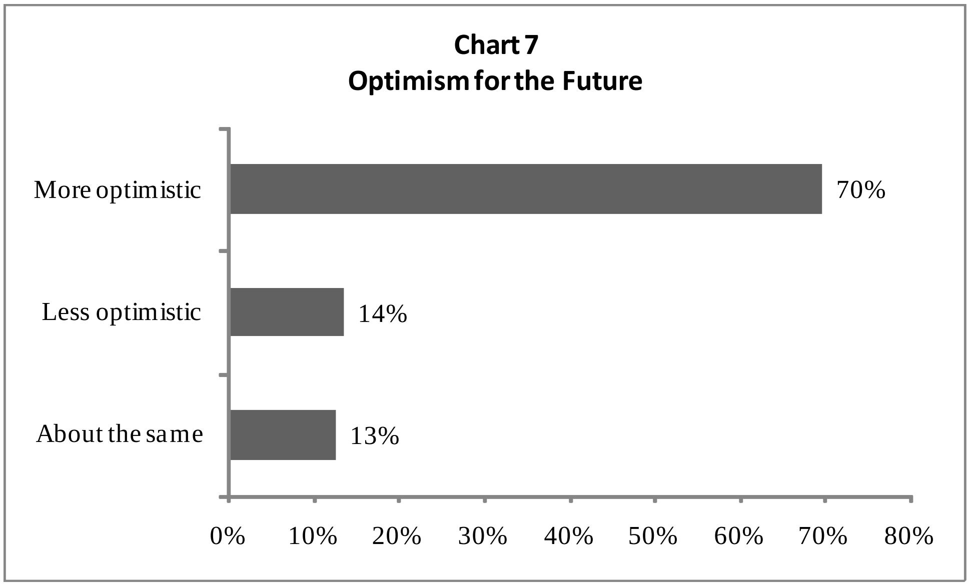
"In general, how would you rate the performance of state government in solving problems in Maryland? Would you say excellent, good, only fair, or poor?"

As shown in Chart 6[4], when it comes to the public's perception of the performance of state government, this year's results show little change in perception of state government performance compared to last year. This year, the results show that only about 1% of respondents rated the state government performance as "excellent", which was exactly the same as last year. More importantly, as compared to last year, the percentage of respondents rating the performance as "Poor" decreased from 23% to 15%. The 2009 ratings for "good" (31%) and "fair" (48%) were very similar to last year's rankings of 27% and 46% respectively.

[4] Does not show the respondents who indicated that they "didn't know," and for this reason, the percentages for each aspect will not sum to 100%.

Election Year Questions

Given the backdrop of the 2008 presidential election, Maryland residents were asked a series of questions about their expectations for 2009 and issues relating to voting in the 2008 election. The first question asked respondents to rate their level of optimism following the presidential election as shown in Chart 7[5].



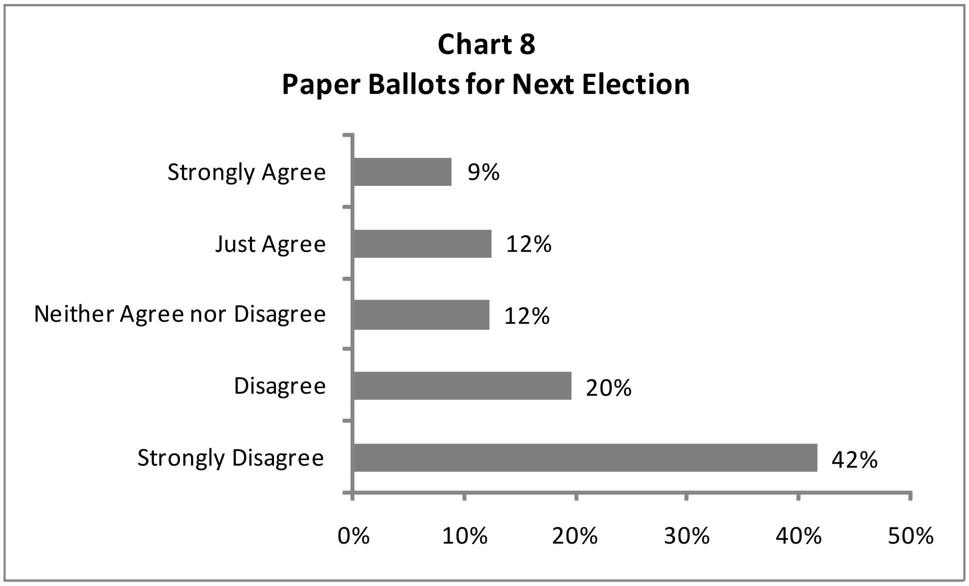
"Since the presidential election on November 4th, are you more or less optimistic about the future?"

The obvious tone after the November 4th election was one of optimism. In particular, the vast majority of Maryland residents interviewed (70%) felt "more optimistic" about the future. By means of comparison those feeling "less optimistic" (14%) and those who feel the future is going to be the same (13%) were only separated by one percentage point, which is not a statistically significant difference in this study.

[5] does not show the respondents who indicated that they "didn't know," and for this reason, the percentages for each aspect will not sum to 100%.

There were some reports of difficulty using the electronic voting machines during the 2008 general election. The Maryland Legislature has already approved a switch to paper ballots. As a follow-up to this issue, the 2009 Policy Choices survey asked Maryland residents some questions about their voting experiences in the last election.

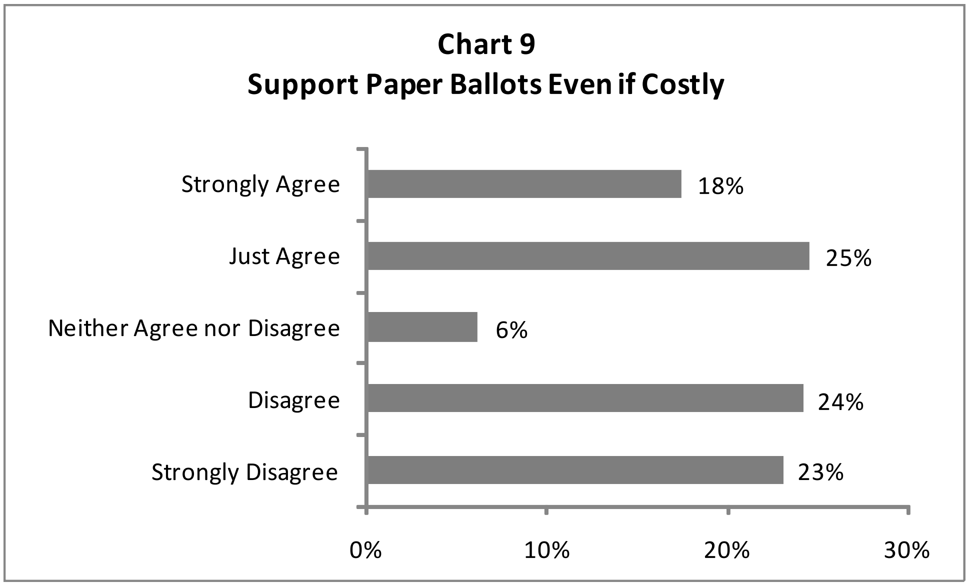
The first of these questions asked whether or not a voter would advocate the use of paper ballots only in the next election instead of the electronic voting machines. The results are presented in Chart 8.



"Would you agree or disagree with the state of Maryland using paper ballots ONLY in the next election?"

Overall, only 21% of Maryland residents interviewed "strongly agreed" (9%) or "just agreed" (12%) with the idea of returning to paper ballots only in the next election. A majority of respondents (42%) "strongly disagreed" with paper ballot only elections. "Disagree" was the second largest category, reflecting the opinions of 20% Marylanders. In total, a majority of respondents disagreed (62%) with using paper ballots only in the next election.

Respondents who indicated that they would either strongly agree, just agree or neither agree nor disagree were asked a follow-up question about their level of agreement if the switch would cost the state of Maryland a significant amount of money. The amount specifically mentioned in the question to go to paper only ballots, was 38 million dollars based on SB 392, Maryland General Assembly 2007 Session, page 5, May 7, 2007. The results of this question are presented in Chart 9.



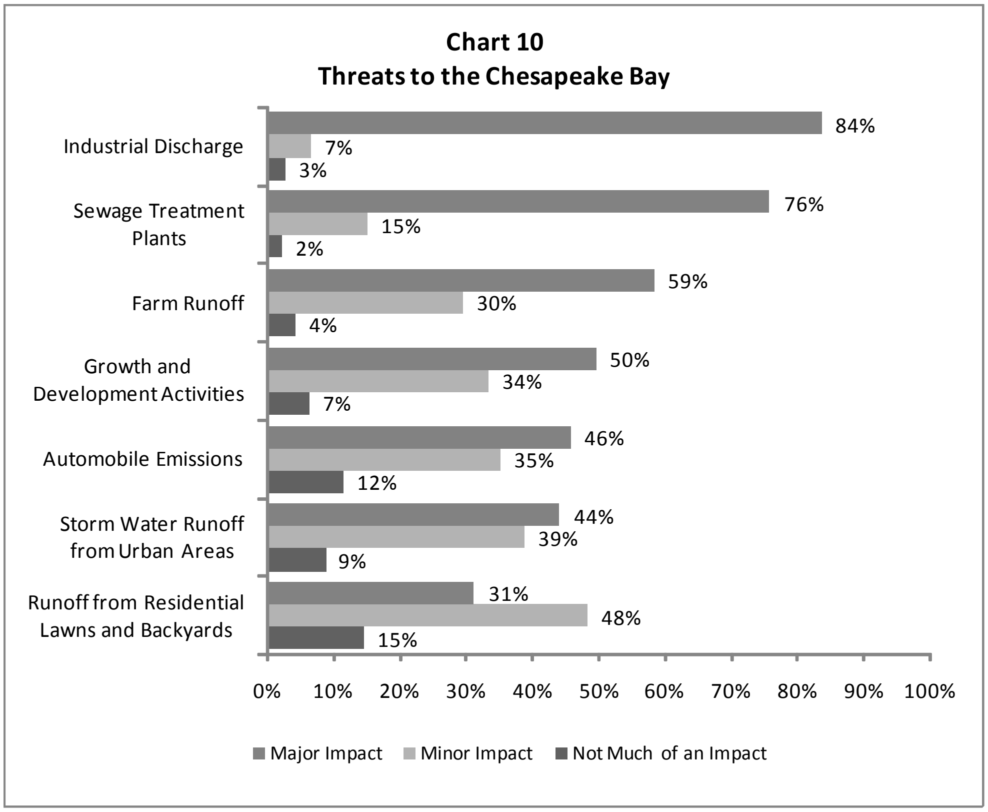
The Maryland General Assembly estimated that the change to paper ballots could cost the state of Maryland 38 million dollars.

Would you agree or disagree with the state of Maryland requiring paper ballots ONLY in the next election, if it required the state to spend a significant amount of money in order to switch?

In light of the cost of using paper ballots only, respondents who supported a switch to paper ballots were split in their continued support. Of those who chose to answer this question, 47% of all respondents either "strongly disagreed" with the switch (23%) or "disagreed" (24%) in light of increased cost. However, a similar percentage (43%) of those interviewed still favored a switch to paper ballots by either indicating strong agreement (18%) or agreement (25%) with the idea. "Neither agree nor disagree" was the smallest category with only 6% of respondents.

THE CHESAPEAKE BAY

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



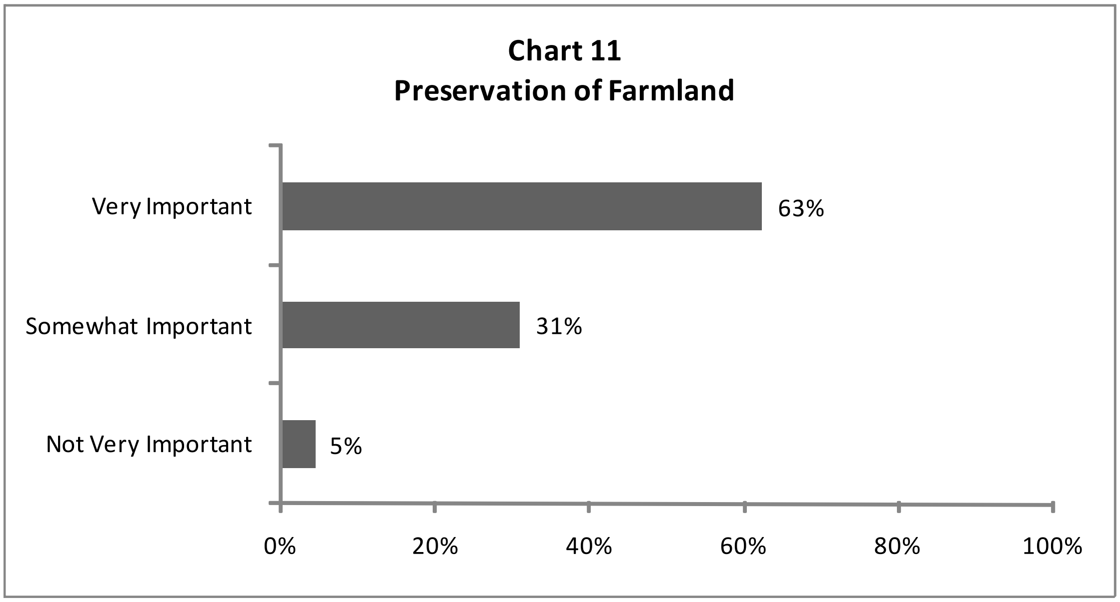
"Next, I'm going to read you a list of possible threats to the Chesapeake Bay. For each, please tell me if you think if it has a major impact, a minor impact, or not much of an impact at all on the health of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries."

Respondents identified industrial discharge (84%) and sewage treatment plants (76%) as posing the most serious threats to the health of the Bay. Respondents also perceived farm runoff (59%) as having a "major impact". Overall, compared to the 2008 Policy Choices report, the percentage of respondents indicating that each threat has a "major impact" has gone down while the percentage indicating a "minor impact" has increased. For example, while in both years farm runoff has been identified as the third biggest threat; in 2008 respondents rated it as either a major impact (69%) or a minor impact (22%). In 2009 the percentages were 59% and 30% respectively. Assuming this trend continues, it may be an indication that threats once perceived as major threats to the Chesapeake Bay are now being perceived minor ones.

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

MARYLAND AGRICULTURE

The role of the Maryland farmer in Maryland's economy and the importance of farmland preservation are reflected in the attitudes of most Marylanders in Chart 11[6].



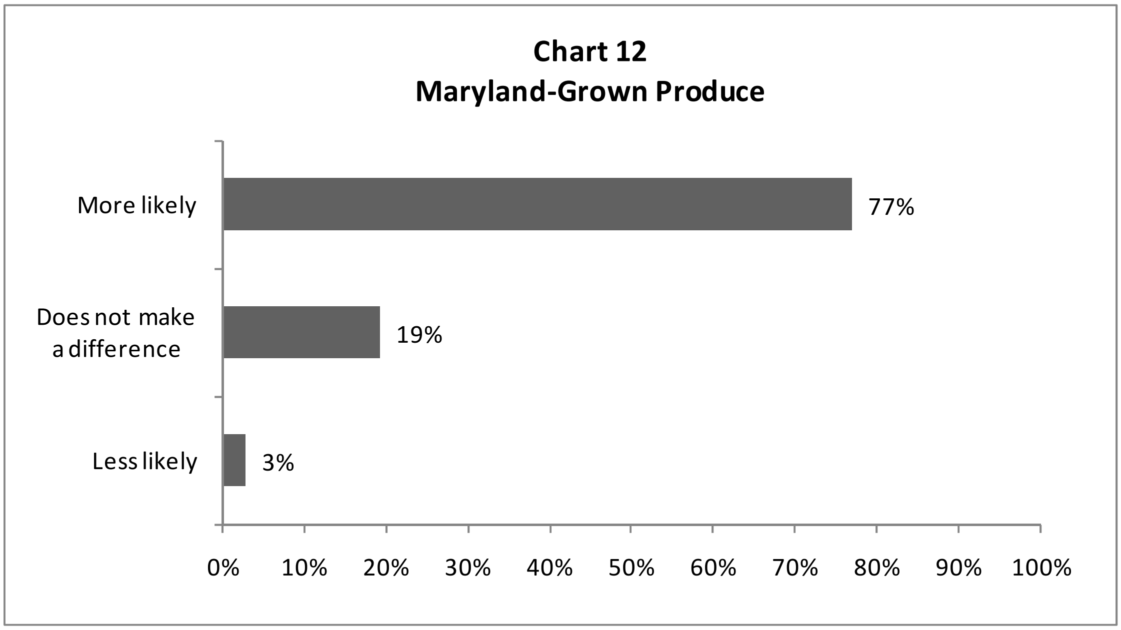
"How important do you think it is for the state to preserve land for farming?

Chart 11[6] shows the response percentages when respondents were asked about their attitudes towards preserving farm land. Thirty-one percent (31%) of those surveyed believed it is at least "somewhat important" that the state preserve land for farming. A full 63% believe it is "very important" that the state of Maryland does so. This is about 10% lower than the percentage of respondents who ranked it as very important last year.

Once again, we did not measure what the cause of Marylanders' feelings were on this issue, however, it remains clear that farmland preservation continues to be an important issue to the overwhelming majority of Marylanders.

[6] Percentages do not add to 100% due to refusals.

Chart 12[7] presents responses to a question regarding purchasing Maryland-grown produce in the grocery store if identified as being Maryland-grown.

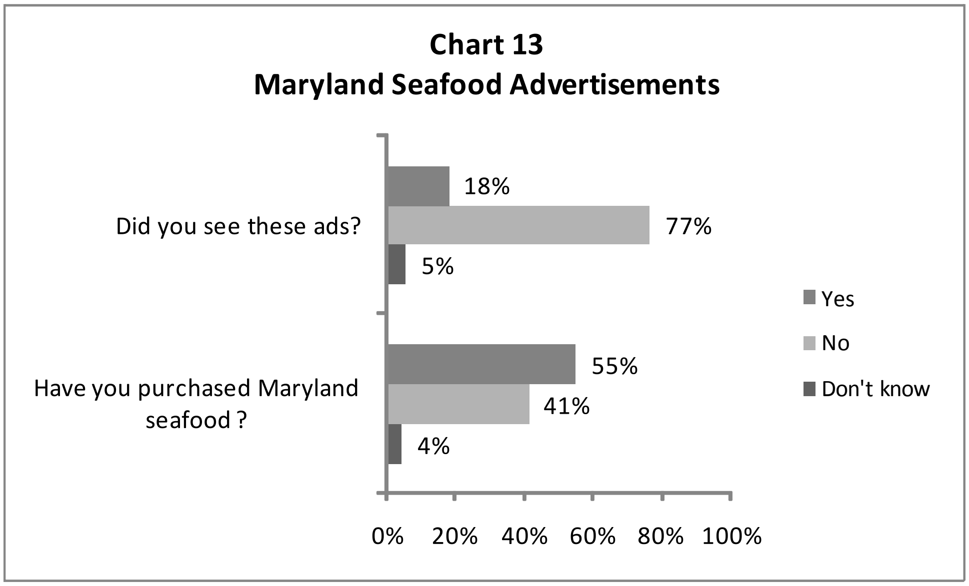


"Are you more likely to or less likely to select fresh fruit, vegetables or other farm products to purchase in your local grocery store if they are identified as having been grown by a Maryland farmer?"

Over three-quarters of Marylanders (77%) are more likely to buy produce that is identified as having been grown by a Maryland farmer. These responses, shown in Chart 12[7], are almost identical to those for the last two years, indicating that public opinion has remained relatively stable.

[7] Does not show the respondents who indicated that they "didn't know," and for this reason, the percentages for each aspect will not sum to 100%.

During the summer of 2008, a number of radio and newspaper ads were purchased to advertise Maryland seafood. Chart 13[8] shows the percentage of respondents who heard the ads, and of those that did, how many purchased Maryland seafood as a result.



The State of Maryland ran ads for Maryland seafood on the radio and in newspapers this summer. Did you see these ads?

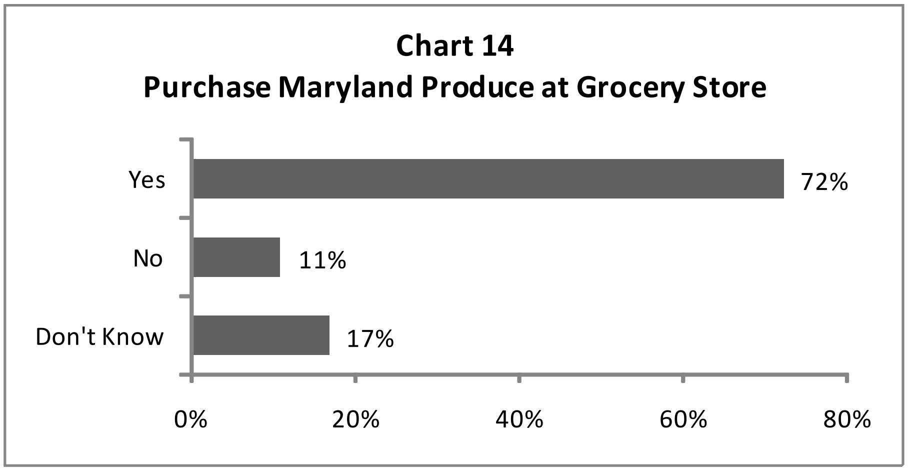
Have you purchased or sought out Maryland seafood as a result of these ads?

The majority of Marylanders (77%) interviewed indicated that they did not see or hear these ads in the summer of 2008. Only 18% saw or heard the ads advocating the purchase of Maryland seafood.

Of those respondents who saw or heard the ads, just over half (55%) purchased Maryland seafood as a result. However, slightly less than half (41%) of those who saw or heard the ads did not purchase Maryland seafood as a result.

[8] Only respondents who heard the ads were asked if they had purchased Maryland seafood.

Maryland residents who were interviewed were asked whether or not they had purchased a Maryland-grown fruit or vegetable in a grocery store. The results are presented in Chart 14.



"During the past 12 months, have you or someone in your household purchased a Maryland-grown fresh fruit or vegetable in a grocery store?"

Almost three-quarters (72%) of Maryland residents interviewed had purchased a Maryland-grown fruit or vegetable in the past year. Only 11% of those interviewed had not purchased a Maryland-grown fruit or vegetable in the past year; however, 17% of respondents were unaware of whether or not the produce they had purchased was Maryland-grown produce.

Table 2[9] shows what percentages of respondents primarily shop at each of the listed grocery stores.

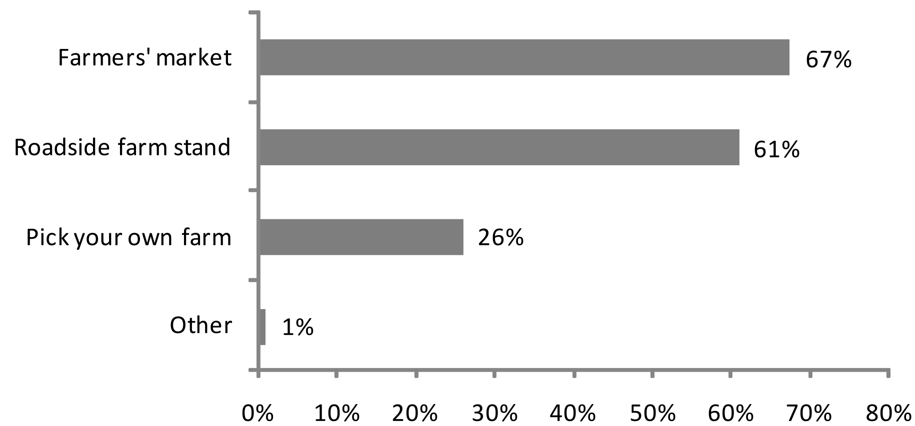
Table 2
Supermarket visited most often

Name	%
Giant Food Supermarkets	33
Safeway Food and Drug	14
Shoppers Food	10
Food Lion	7
Wal-Mart	5
Weis Market	5
Super Fresh/A&P Food Stores	4
Mars Super Market	3
Whole Foods Market/Fresh Fields	2
Acme Markets	1
Other	11

[9] Only lists grocery stores at which more than 1% of respondents reported shopping.

Respondents were asked next about the different places where they or someone in their household purchased a farm product from Maryland farmers in the last year. Respondents were able to select more than one location, so the percentage totals will equal more than 100%.

Chart 15
Maryland-Grown Produce Purchases

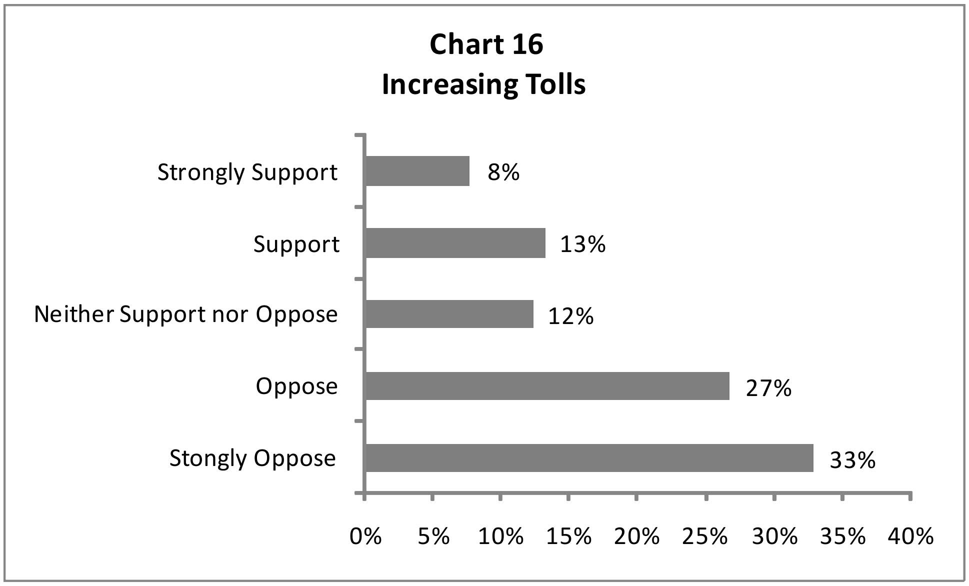


In the past year, have you or others in your household purchased a Maryland farm product at a?

Unlike last year's survey, the percentage of respondents who had purchased a Maryland farm product declined for each category. The percentage of respondents who had gone to a pick your own farm in the 2009 report (26%) was the closest to the result of the 2008 report (28%) out of all the categories, however, it also represents the second year of reported decline as the value in 2007 was 32%. Purchases at farmers' markets declined from 82% in 2008 to 67% in 2009. There was a similar drop in purchases from roadside farm stands from 80% in 2008 to 61% in 2009.

Maryland Roads and Drivers

The 2009 Policy Choices Survey asked Maryland residents numerous questions about their opinions of potential policies related to driving in Maryland. The first of these questions concerned easing traffic congestion on toll roads and bridges by increasing tolls, and the results are summarized in Chart 16[10].

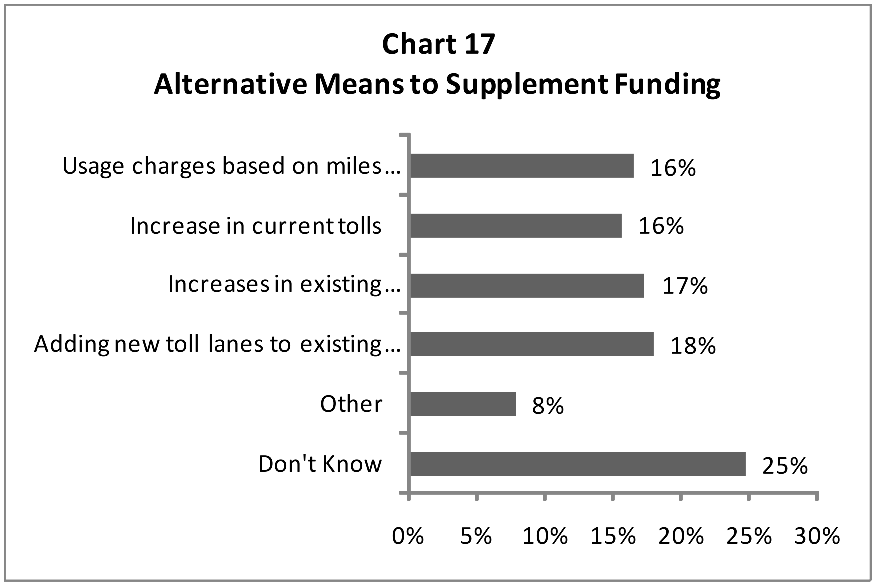


"What is your level of support for increasing tolls on existing Maryland toll roads and bridges during peak travel hours to reduce travel time per commute?"

The majority of Maryland residents interviewed either "strongly opposed" (33%) or "opposed" (27%) increasing tolls during peak driving hours. Only 8% of those interviewed said that they would strongly support increasing tolls compared to 13% who said they would support increased tolls as a means to ease traffic congestion. Overall, despite the clearly defined benefit of reduced congestion, the general reaction was negative to the proposed increase to existing tolls.

[10] Does not add up to 100% due to refusals.

The second driving-related question concerned the reliance on fuel taxes to fund maintenance of roads and bridges throughout Maryland. Given the current financial difficulties, people are driving less; coupled with the fact that cars are getting higher gas mileage, the revenue created by taxing fuel has decreased. Chart 17 shows the alternatives respondents would prefer to make up for the decrease in funding generated by fuel taxes.



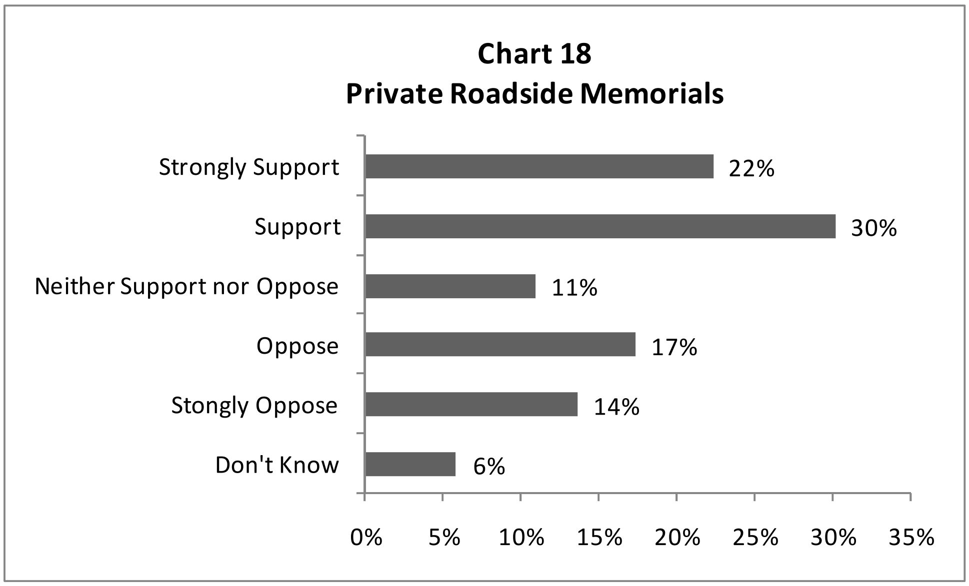
"Fuel taxes serve as a major source of funding for federal and state transportation infrastructure (such as roads, bridges, transit, etc.). Reductions in the amount of fuel being purchased is reducing that revenue."

"Which of the following alternatives would you support as a means to supplement funding to maintain and expand transportation products and services?"

1. Usage charges based on miles traveled per vehicle
2. Increase in current tolls
3. Increases in existing transportation taxes and fees
4. Adding new toll lanes to existing un-tolled highways

Overall, there was very little difference in the levels of support for each of the proposed methods of increasing funding. The four most highly rated options were statistically identical ranging between 16% and 18%. Notable responses to the "other" category were opposition to any of the proposed funding methods listed in this question and increasing current fuel taxes. A quarter of those interviewed said they did not know how to increase funding.

Some Maryland residents have constructed private memorials for friends or family members on roadsides to commemorate specific victims of automobile accidents. However, leaving any private property on a Maryland roadside is prohibited. To curb this practice, it has been proposed that the state would provide, place and maintain a memorial sign for a small fee paid by the friends or family of the victim. Respondents were asked whether they would support or oppose such a program. The results are presented in Chart 18.

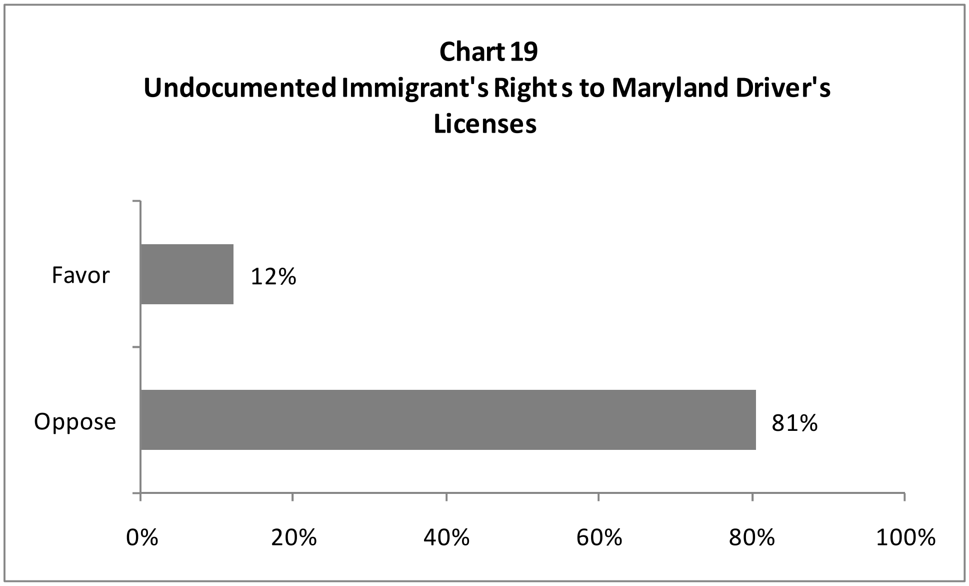


"Would you support or oppose a program where the state would provide, place and maintain a memorial sign for a fee paid by the family or friends of the victim thus preventing creation of private memorials which is illegal?"

The overall reaction to the proposal as a means to prevent the creation of private memorials was positive. Of those showing an opinion, most (52%) either "strongly supported" (22%) or "supported" (30%) the idea of a state program funded by the family or friends of car accident victims.

Those opposing the proposal were a lower percentage of all respondents at 31%. Of that 31%, only 14% were strongly opposed to the state placing memorial signs as a means to prevent private memorials. A similar percentage of respondents (11%) neither supported nor opposed the proposal. Those who responded "don't know" to the questions were a large enough percentage of respondents (6%) that the category was included in the final analysis chart.

Respondents were asked if they would support or oppose allowing undocumented immigrants to obtain Maryland Driver's Licenses. The results are presented in Chart 19[11].



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

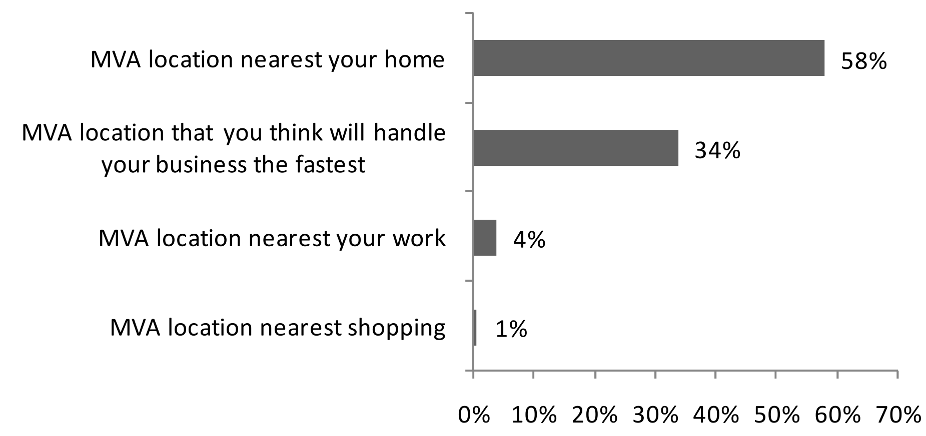
Of those respondents offering an opinion on the subject of undocumented immigrants obtaining Maryland Driver's licenses, a large majority (81%) opposed the idea. Only 12% supported the idea.

[11] Does not total to 100% due to respondents who did not offer an opinion.

Registering a Vehicle in Maryland

Respondents were also asked questions about their preferences for interacting with the state concerning motor vehicle-related issues. The first of these questions, presented in Chart 20, asked what Maryland residents valued most when deciding which Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) office to visit.

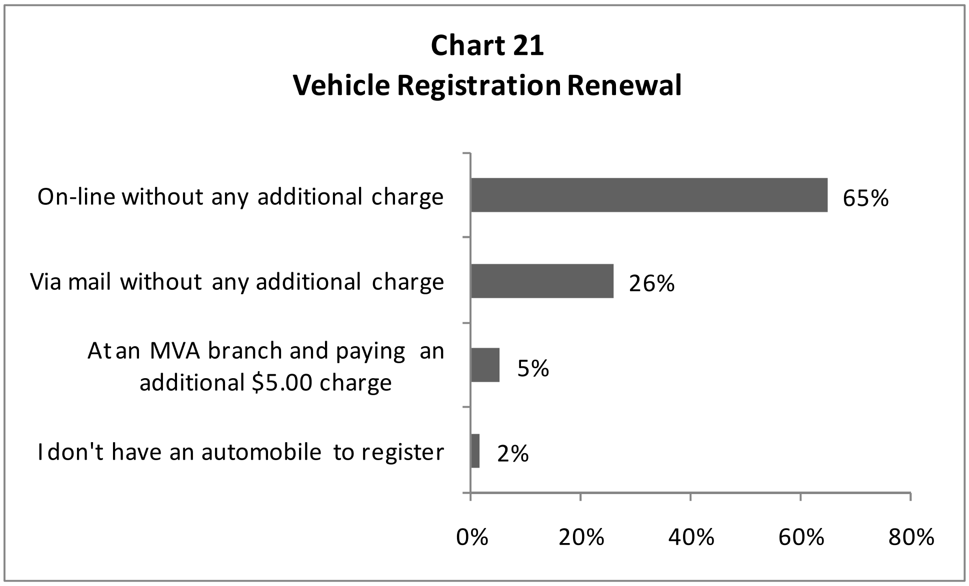
Chart 20
Preference of MVA Location



"Which of the following is most important in determining what MVA location you visit?"

The MVA locations nearest shopping (1%) and work (4%) were not strong determining factors of what MVA location Maryland residents choose to visit. The second largest response category was determined by the speed of service at 34%. It would appear that most Maryland residents choose to go to the MVA closest to their home (58%) when interacting with the MVA.

Maryland residents were asked about their preferred method of registering their motor vehicle. The results are presented in Chart 21.

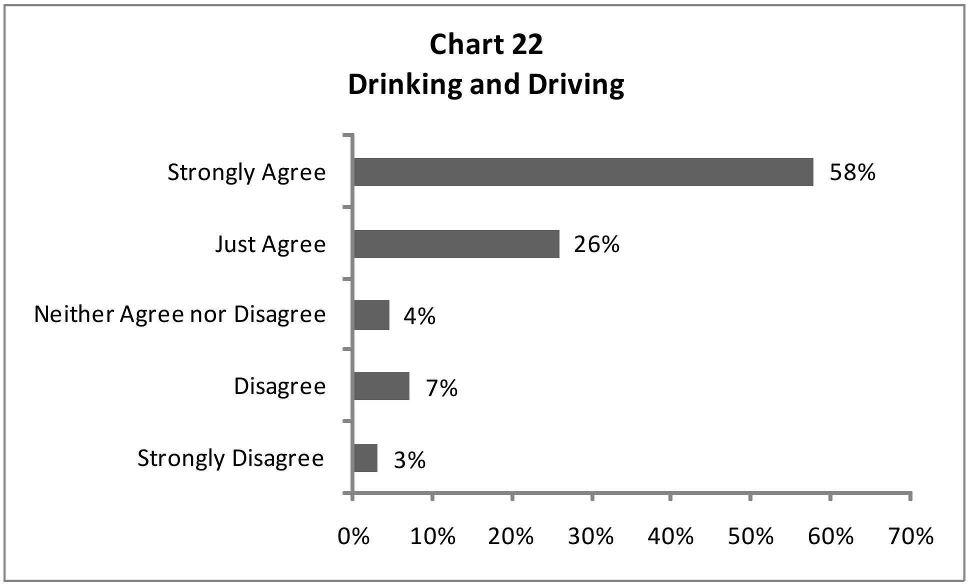


"Which of the following options would you prefer the next time that you renew your vehicle registration?"

Most Marylanders interviewed (65%) would prefer to renew their vehicle registration online. The number willing to register online was twice the number of respondents (26%) who would prefer to register via regular mail. The first two options specified that no additional cost would be incurred; the third option suggested that a fee of $5.00 would be applied for registering a vehicle in person. Still 5% of respondents would prefer to register their vehicle in-person despite an increased cost.

Drinking and Driving

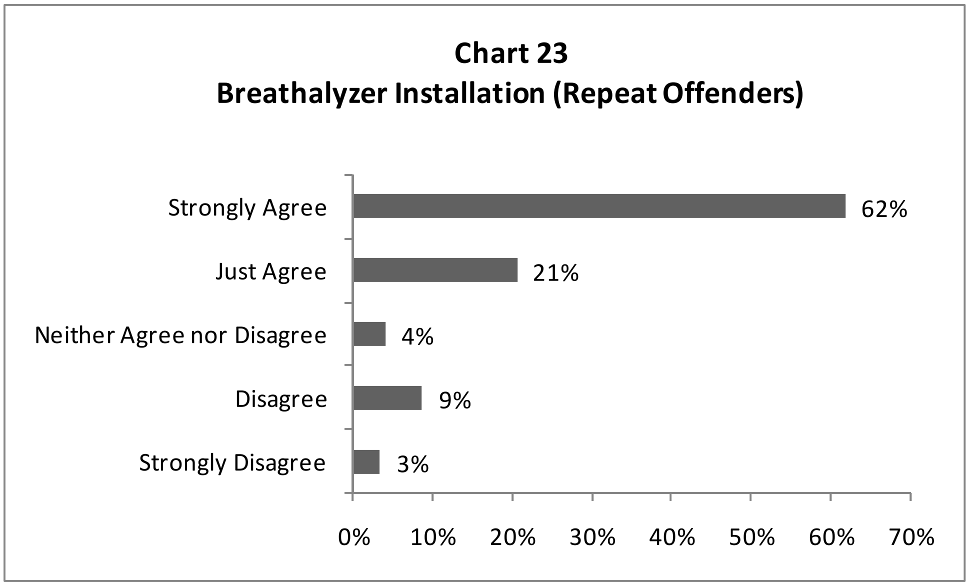
Respondents were also asked a series of questions to gauge their opinions on how best to handle drunk driving offenders. The first of these questions, shown in Chart 22, asked if all drunk driving offenders should receive some level of treatment, rehabilitation, and education about alcohol as a means to prevent further drunk driving.



"All driving under the Influence offenders will be required to receive some level of treatment, rehabilitation, and education about alcohol and driving."

Overall, 84% of respondents either "strongly agree" (58%) or "just agree" (26%) with providing some form of treatment, rehabilitation and education to those convicted of driving under the influence. By means of comparison, only 7% "disagreed" with the proposal, and an even smaller percentage (3%) "strongly disagreed" with the idea. Of all respondents who expressed an opinion, only (4%) neither agreed nor disagreed with providing treatment, rehabilitation, and education. This shows that a majority of Marylanders are willing to support a program that would work with driving under the influence offenders as a means of dealing with problems related to drunk driving in Maryland.

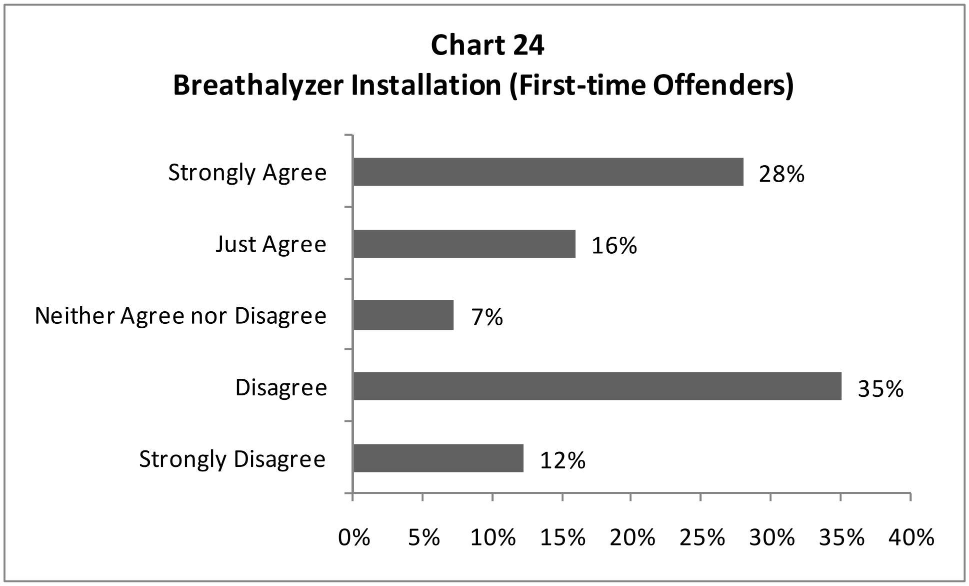
Taking driving under the influence prevention a step further, respondents were asked about their support for installing breathalyzers in cars that would prevent a driver from starting the car if they failed the breath test. Marylanders who were interviewed were presented with two situations to gauge their level of support for the use of breathalyzers to immobilize a car. The first is presented in Chart 23.



"All repeat offenders will be required to have breathalyzers installed in their cars so that they cannot drive unless they pass the breath test."

The installation of a breathalyzer in a driving under the influence offender's car is a mechanical means of preventing drunk driving. When asked about their level of support for this proposal in the cars of people who had repeatedly been cited for driving under the influence, a large majority of those interviewed either "strongly agreed" (62%) or "just agreed" (21%) with the proposal. Only 4% did not have an opinion on the subject, whereas only 12% of those interviewed either "disagreed" (9%) or "strongly disagreed" (3%) with the idea. This suggests that Marylanders are willing to support mechanical means of preventing driving under the influence for repeat offenders.

The second situation respondents were presented with was similar, however, first-time offenders were substituted for repeat offenders in the previous question. The results of this question are presented in Chart 24.

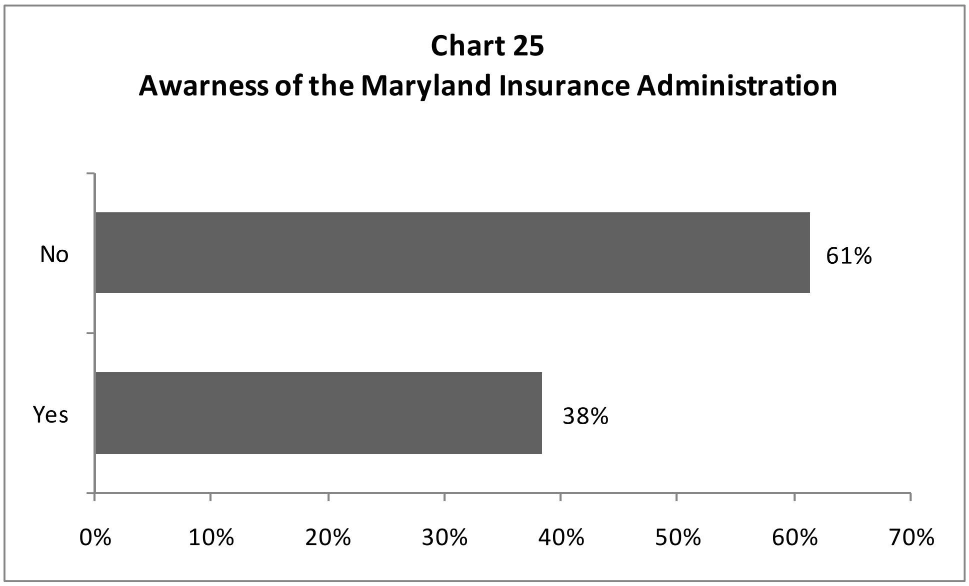


"All first time offenders will be required to have breathalyzers installed in their cars so that they cannot drive unless they pass the breath test."

In the case of installing a breathalyzer in a first-time offender's vehicle, there was little statistical difference between the percentage of those offering opinions supporting the proposal and those disagreeing with the idea. Forty-four percent of respondents, either "strongly agreed" (28%) or "just agreed" (16%) with placing a breathalyzer in a first time offender's car. However, 47% of respondents either "disagreed" (35%) or "strongly disagreed" (12%) with the proposal. Only 7% of respondents "neither agreed nor disagreed" with the proposal. It seems that Marylanders take situational factors into consideration when supporting or opposing means to prevent repeated drunk driving.

Insurance in Maryland

Respondents were asked a series of questions about their insurance concerns. Topics included satisfaction with insurance, worries about the financial solvency of insurance companies and awareness of the function of the Maryland Insurance Administration. Awareness of the Maryland Insurance Administration is presented in Chart 25[12].

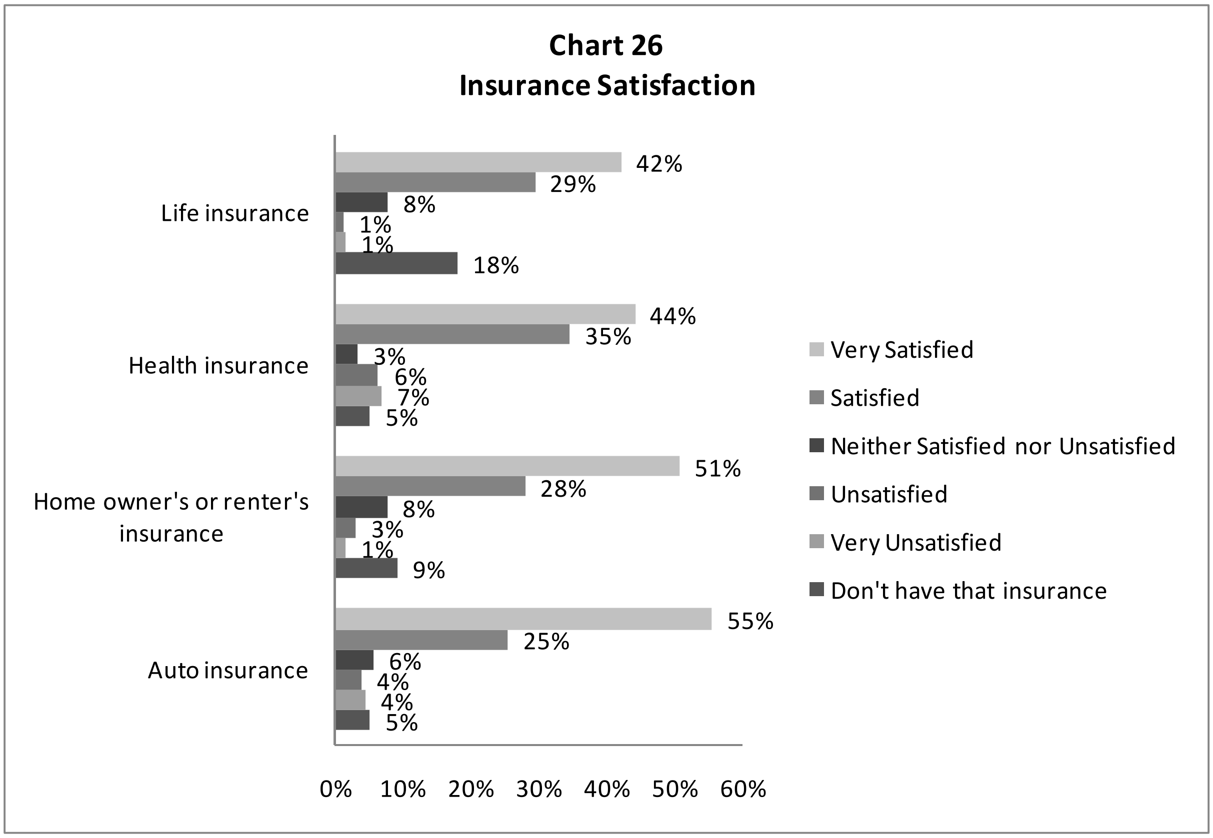


"Are you aware that there is a state agency, the Maryland Insurance Administration, that can help you if you have a problem with your auto, homeowner's/renter's, life, or health insurance company?"

The majority of respondents (61%) were not aware that the Maryland Insurance Administration provides services to Maryland residents who are having problems with their insurance. However, 38% of respondents indicated that they were aware of the functions of the Maryland Insurance Administration.

[12] Does not sum to 100% due to respondents answering "don't know."

Chart 26 shows how satisfied or dissatisfied Marylanders are with their various types of insurance.

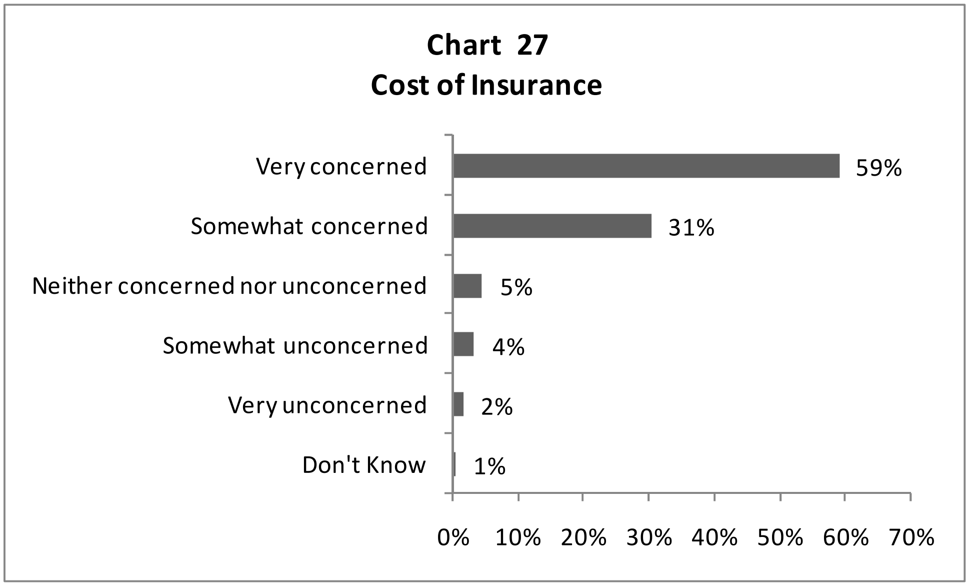


"Over the past 12 months, how satisfied have you been with your…?"

Overall, respondents were either "very satisfied" or "satisfied" with their life (71%), health (79%), home owners/renter's (79%) and auto insurance (80%), respectively. Health insurance was the form of insurance with the highest percentage of respondents indicating that they were either "unsatisfied" (6%) or "very unsatisfied" (7%). Dissatisfaction with auto insurance for those who were "unsatisfied" or "very unsatisfied" (4% each) was the only other form of insurance where the percentage of respondents was greater than the margin of error. The percentage of dissatisfaction with home owner's/renters insurance and life insurance were smaller than the margin of error, and therefore statistically insignificant.

As part of the question, respondents could also indicate that they did not purchase a particular type of insurance. Roughly one-fifth (18%) of respondents had not purchased life insurance, 9% had no home owner's/renter's insurance and those without auto or health insurance were each 5% of respondents.

Respondents were asked how concerned they were with different aspects of their insurance. The first question asked about concerns with the cost of insurance. Responses are presented in Chart 27[13].

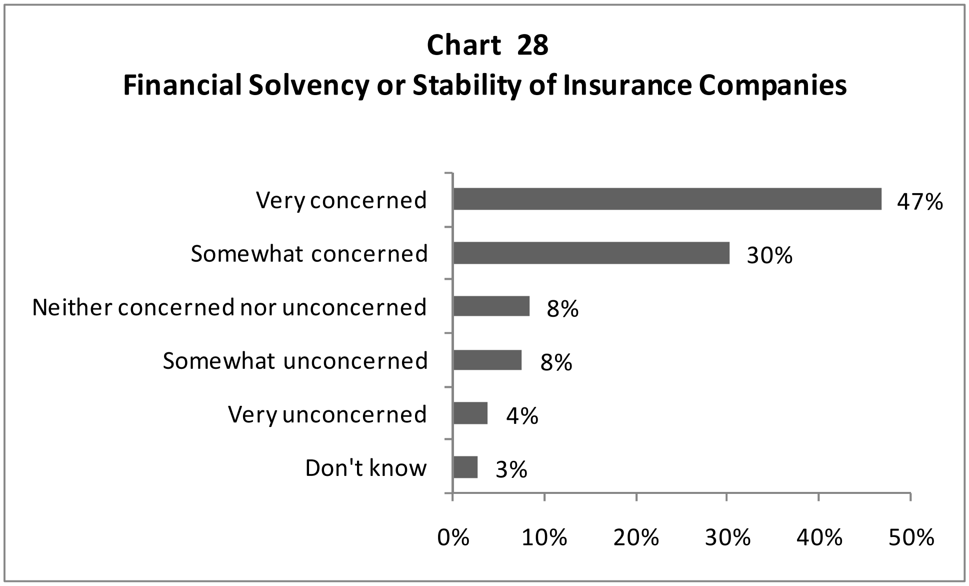


"When thinking about insurance in general, how concerned are you about the cost of insurance?"

Maryland residents interviewed were either "very concerned" (59%) or "somewhat concerned" (31%) about the cost of their insurance. All of the other response categories indicate the opinions of 5% or less of those interviewed. While this question indicates that concern exists about the cost of insurance, further research should be done to assess whether it is an issue of overall cost or one of cost for level of service provided.

[13] Sums to over 100% due to rounding.

Continuing the questions about insurance-related concerns, respondents were asked how concerned they were with the financial solvency or stability of their insurance company, and these results are summarized in Chart 28.

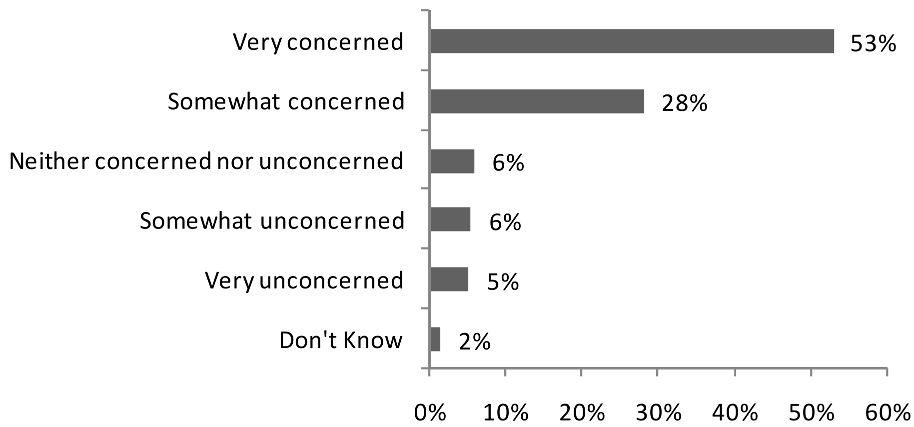


"When thinking about insurance in general, how concerned are you about the financial solvency or stability of insurance companies?"

Once again, a large percent of respondents expressed concern regarding their insurance. Seventy-seven percent of respondents were either "very concerned" (47%) or "somewhat concerned" (30%) with the financial solvency or stability of their insurance companies. Those who were "neither concerned nor unconcerned" and "somewhat unconcerned" with the financial solvency and stability of their insurance companies represent 8% of respondents each. Of all survey respondents, only 4% were "very unconcerned" with the solvency and stability of their insurance companies, whereas 3% indicated that they "didn't know" how to assess their level of concern.

The final question relating to insurance concerns dealt with understanding one's insurance rights and benefits. The results are presented in Chart 29.

Chart 29
Understanding Insurance Contract Rights and Benefits

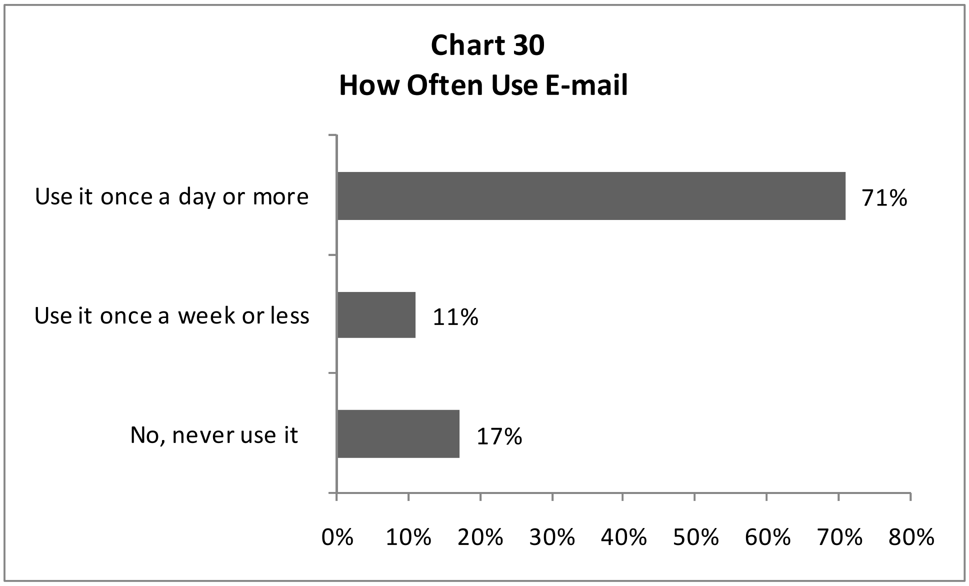


"When thinking about insurance in general, how concerned are you about understanding your insurance contract rights and benefits?"

Once again, respondents expressed concern about their insurance. In this case 81% of respondents either were "very concerned" (53%) or "somewhat concerned" about (28%) understanding their contract rights and benefits relative to their insurance. The percentage of respondents who were "neither concerned nor unconcerned" (6%), "somewhat unconcerned" (6%) and "very unconcerned" (5%) received almost identical percentages of the total responses.

E-mail and On-line Commerce

Chart 30[14] presents the first of several questions about e-mail and on-line commerce. Respondents were asked if they used e-mail and how often.

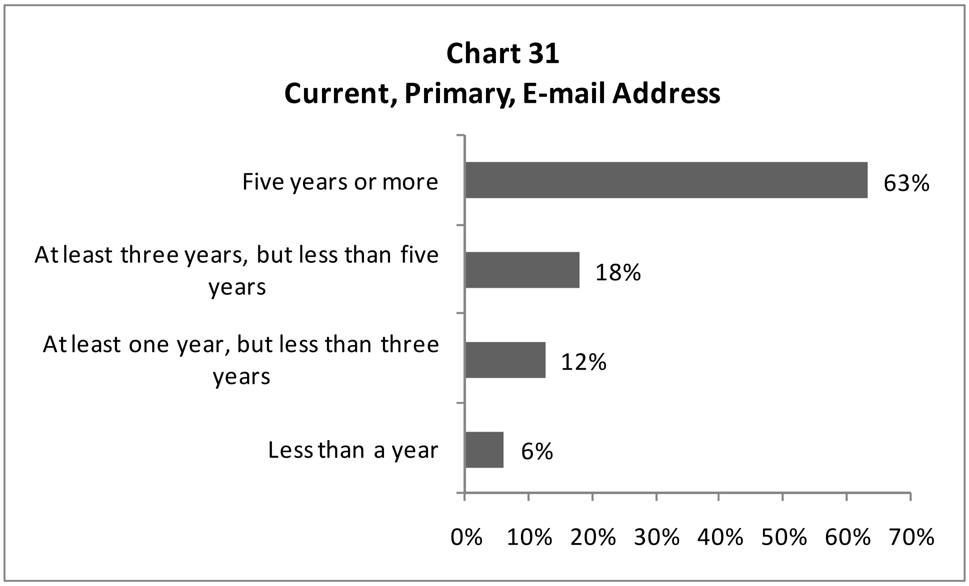


"Do you use e-mail and how often?"

The vast majority of respondents (71%) used e-mail once a day or more as part of their daily life. Only 11% of respondents used e-mail once a week or less and 17% did not use e-mail at all. Further research should be conducted to differentiate between use of e-mail at home versus at work to discover where Marylanders are utilizing e-mail.

[14] Sums to 99% because of refusals to answer the question.

As a follow-up to the previous question, respondents who had an e-mail account were asked about the length of their e-mail use as presented in Chart 31[15].

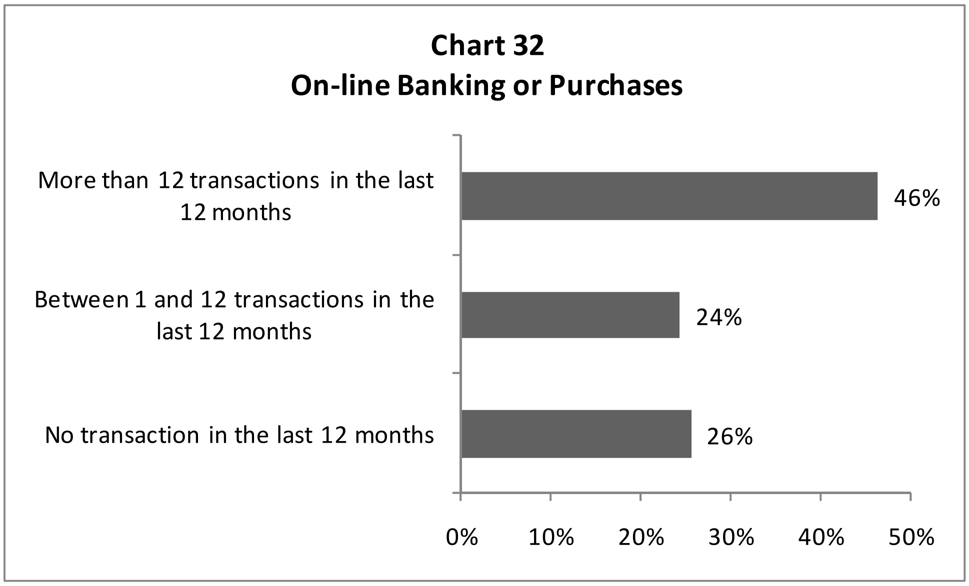


"How long have you had your current, primary, e-mail address?"

Of those with an e-mail account they used regularly, 63% had the same account for 5 or more years, 18% had the same account for 3 to 5 years, and 12% had the same account for 1-3 years.

[15] Sums to 99% due to those that refused to respond to the question.

The last internet question, presented in Chart 32[16], asked about financial transactions via the internet over the past 12 months.



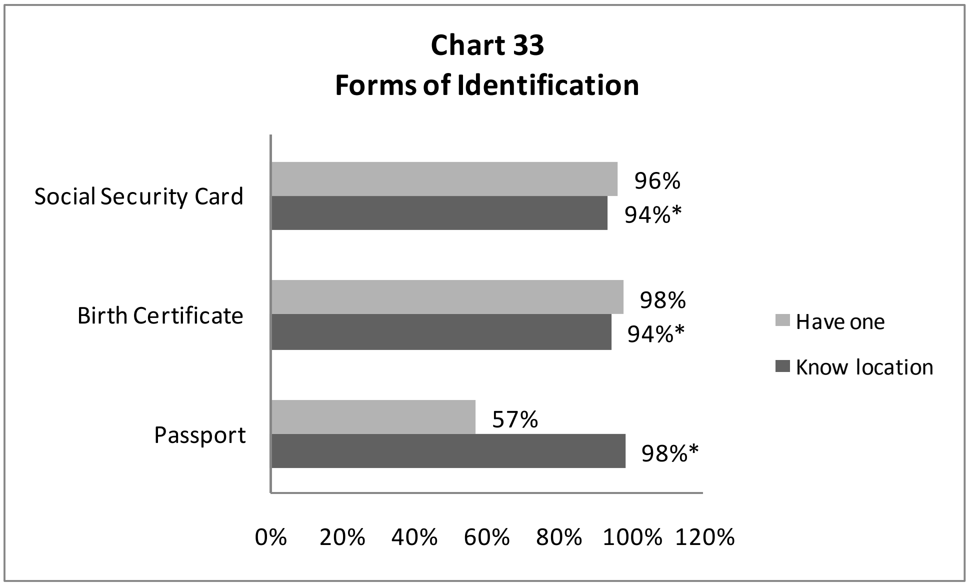
"In the last 12 months, have you used on-line banking or bought goods or services online, i.e., from Amazon, eBay, or other on-line retailers?"

Just over two-thirds, (70%) of respondents engaged in on-line commerce in the past year. Forty-six percent engaged in 12 or more on-line transactions in the past year and 24% engaged in 1-12 on-line transactions in the past year. On-line commerce includes on-line banking or on-line purchases of goods or services.

[16] Sums to 96% as 4% of respondents refused to answer the question.

Forms of Identification

The final question on the 2009 Policy Choices Survey inquired about what forms of identification Maryland residents have, and if respondents were aware of the location of that identification. The results of this inquiry are presented in Chart 33[17].



"Which of the following forms of identification do you have…?"

Of Maryland residents responding to the survey, 96% reported having a social security card. Of those of those who indicated that they had a social security card, 94% knew its location. The most common form of identification respondents indicated having was a birth certificate (98%). Almost all, 94%, know where their birth certificate is. Only 57% of respondents had a passport, and of those, 98% knew where to locate their passport.

[17] An asterisk next to a percentage indicates the valid percent of those who had each form of identification. "No" responses were not presented.

TABLE 3
WEIGHTED SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS

Gender	Male	48%
	Female	52%
Race	White	73%
	Black	20%
	Hispanic	1%
	Other	4%
	Refused	2%
Education	< than High School	3%
	High School Grad/GED	17%
	Some College/Tech School	27%
	College Graduate	30%
	Graduate or Professional School	21%
Party	Democrat	48%
	Republican	28%
	Independent	14%
	Not Registered	6%
	Other	30%
	Refused	2%
Ideology	Liberal	22%
	Moderate	29%
	Conservative	21%
	Don't think in those terms	27%
	Refused	1%
Income	<$25K annual	9%
	$25K to $50K	20%
	$50K to $100K	32%
	>$100K	26%
	Refused	7%
Age	21 years to 34 years	26%
	35 years to 54 years	42%
	55 years to 64 years	15%
	65 years and older	16%
	Refused	2%

Appendix A: Weighting

Two weights, one for gender and age each were created using the same proportional weighting formula seen below.

$$\pi_k = \frac{N_k / N}{n_k / n}$$

In the standard proportional weighting formula, above, (N) represents a known population, (n) represents the total sample size and (k) indicates a subsection of the respective total.

Using 2007 U.S. Census data, The Schaefer Center for Public Policy collected information on population percentages for age and gender for the state of Maryland. The multiplicative terms of the four age categories and two gender categories resulted in the calculation of 8 weighting factors.

	Maryland Population	Nk/N	Sample	nk/n	Gender Weight ((Nk/N)/(nk/n))
Male	2,706,429	0.483	290	0.362	1.335
Female	2,891,414	0.516	511	0.637	0.809
N=	5,597,843	n=	801		

	Maryland Population	Nk/N	Sample	nk/n	Gender Weight ((Nk/N)/(nk/n))
20-34	1087805	0.2673454	91	0.1159236	2.3062215
35-54	1723620	0.4236071	323	0.411465	1.0295095
55-64	607099	0.1492043	188	0.2394904	0.6230071
65+	650388	0.1598432	183	0.233121	0.6856663
N=	4068912	n=	785		

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