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Maryland Poll

January 2011

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Methodology

Patrick E. Gonzales graduated from the University of Baltimore in 1981 with a degree in political science. He began his career as an analyst with *Mason-Dixon Opinion Research* and is the former president of *Mason-Dixon Campaign Polling*.

Mr. Gonzales has polled and analyzed hundreds of elections in Maryland since the mid 1980's. Additionally, he and his associates have conducted numerous market research projects and crafted message development programs for businesses and organizations throughout the state.

Laslo V. Boyd is a partner of *Gonzales Research & Marketing Strategies*. Dr. Boyd received his Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania and has over 30 years of experience in higher education, government, and public policy.

Hilary Duff Gonzales is Director of Sales and Marketing for *Gonzales Research & Marketing Strategies*. Mrs. Gonzales has over 20 years experience promoting the state of Maryland, particularly in the tour and travel industry.

This survey was conducted by ***Gonzales Research & Marketing Strategies*** from January 13th through January 19th, 2011. A total of 802 registered voters in Maryland who vote regularly were interviewed by telephone. A cross-section of interviews was conducted in each jurisdiction within the state to reflect general election voting patterns.

The margin of error (MOE), according to customary statistical standards, is no more than plus or minus 3.5 percentage points. There is a 95 percent probability that the "true" figures would fall within this range if the entire survey universe were sampled. The margin for error is higher for any demographic subgroup, such as gender or race.

Maryland Statewide Poll Sample Demographics

PARTY AFFILIATION	Number	Percent
Democrat	458	57.1 %
Republican	241	30.0 %
Independent	103	12.8 %
Total	802	100.0 %

RACE	Number	Percent
White	599	74.7 %
African-American	184	22.9 %
Other/Refused	19	2.4 %
Total	802	100.0 %

GENDER	Number	Percent
Male	386	48.1 %
Female	416	51.9 %
Total	802	100.0 %

REGION	Number	Percent
Eastern Sh/So MD	111	13.8 %
Baltimore City	68	8.5 %
Baltimore Suburbs	294	36.7 %
Washington Suburbs	233	29.1 %
Western MD	96	12.0 %
Total	802	100.0 %

Regional Groupings are as follows:

Eastern Shore/ Southern Md	Baltimore City	Baltimore Suburbs	Washington Suburbs	Western Maryland
Calvert Co.	Baltimore City	Anne Arundel Co.	Montgomery Co.	Allegany Co.
Caroline Co.		Baltimore Co.	Prince George's Co.	Carroll Co.
Cecil Co.		Harford Co.		Frederick Co.
Charles Co.		Howard Co.		Garrett Co.
Dorchester Co.				Washington Co.
Kent Co.				
Queen Anne's Co.				
Somerset Co.				
St. Mary's Co.				
Talbot Co.				
Wicomico Co.				
Worcester Co.				

Summary

Most Important Issue facing State

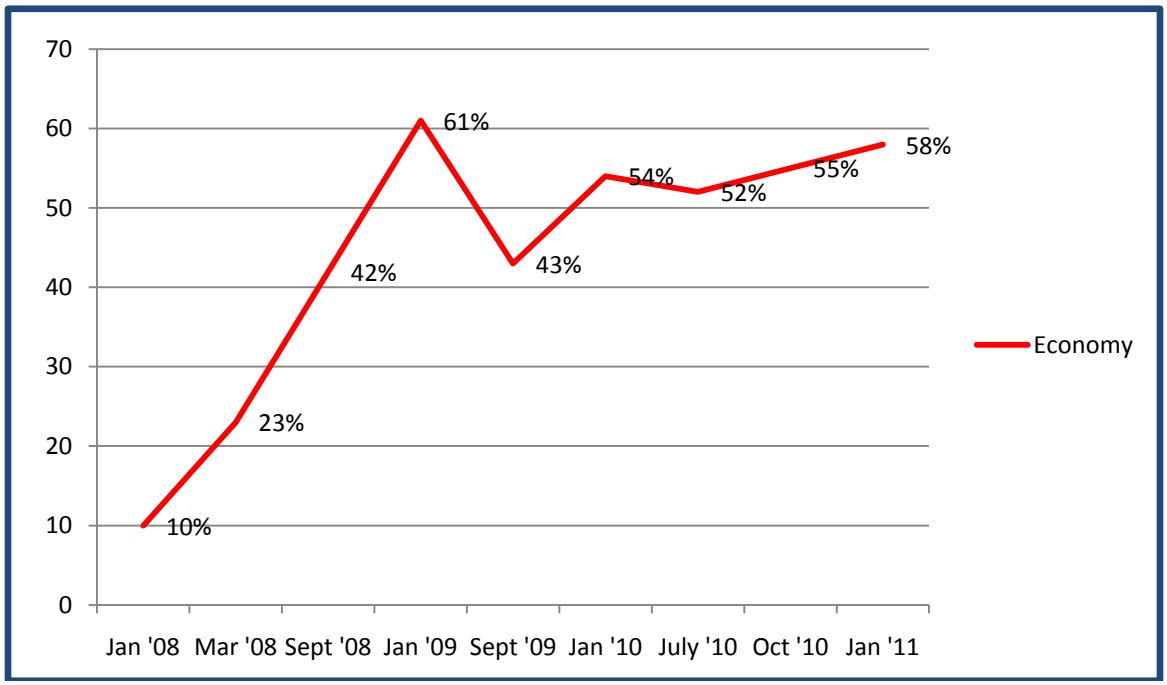
As the 2011 Legislative Session gets under way, the economy and jobs remain the number one issue for Marylanders.

Statewide, 58% of voters say that the economy is the most important issue facing the state, while 15% say the budget deficit is the most important issue. Other issues received only single-digit mention.

Concern about the economy spans party lines, being most important for 60% of Democrats, 56% of Republicans, and 53% of independents.

A look at the economy as the most important issue for Marylanders since January 2008:

Figure 1 Economy/jobs Most Important



President Barack Obama Job Approval

President Obama's job approval is up since October. Statewide, 54% approve of the job he is doing as president, while 40% disapprove.

Obama Job Approval	Approve	Disapprove	No opinion
January 2011	54%	40%	6%
October 2010	52%	43%	5%
July 2010	51%	38%	11%
January 2010	56%	30%	14%
September 2009	58%	31%	11%
January 2009	80%	11%	9%

By party, 77% of Democrats approve of the job Obama is doing, while 85% of Republicans disapprove. With independents, 50% approve and 45% disapprove. Among African-American voters in the state, 90% approve of the job President Obama is doing.

Governor O'Malley's job approval is higher than it's ever been

Governor Martin O'Malley Job Approval

Statewide, 58% of Maryland voters approve of the job Martin O'Malley is doing as governor, while 30% disapprove. By party, 77% of Democrats approve of the job O'Malley is doing as governor, as do 22% of Republicans, and 55% of independents.

O'Malley Job Approval	Approve	Disapprove	No opinion
January 2011	58%	30%	13%
October 2010	48%	44%	8%
July 2010	48%	39%	13%
January 2010	46%	36%	18%
September 2009	48%	37%	15%
January 2009	49%	37%	14%
September 2008	45%	35%	20%
March 2008	37%	48%	15%
January 2008	39%	49%	12%
October 2007	46%	31%	23%
March 2007	52%	21%	27%

The highly successful campaign O'Malley waged in the fall has him well-positioned to lead during this current legislative session.

Gun Control

Among Maryland voters, 45% say that gun control laws in Maryland should be made stricter, 24% say they should be less strict, and 26% say they should be kept as they are now.

The results by party:

	Stricter	Less Strict	Kept As They Are
Democrats	63%	11%	21%
Republicans	10%	46%	39%
Independents	44%	27%	20%

Attitudes toward gun control break sharply by party

Death Penalty

Among respondents, 56% say they favor they death penalty in Maryland, while 36% oppose it, with 8% giving no response.

By party:

	Favor	Oppose
Democrats	45%	46%
Republicans	78%	17%
Independents	52%	38%

When asked if they believe that the sentence of life without the possibility of parole is, or is not, an acceptable substitute for the death penalty, 60% say that life in prison without the possibility of parole is an acceptable alternative to the death penalty, while 33% say that life without parole is not an acceptable alternative, with 7% offering no response.

Same-Sex Marriage

Fifty-one percent of voters say they would favor a law in Maryland allowing same-sex couples to marry, “giving them the same legal rights as heterosexual married couples in areas such as tax exemptions, inheritance and pension coverage,” while 44% oppose such a law, and 5% gave no response.

By party, 65% of Democrats and 52% of independents favor a law allowing same-sex couples to marry, giving them the same legal rights as heterosexual married couples, while 73% of Republicans oppose it.

With regard to a law in Maryland allowing same-sex couples to form a civil union, 62% say they favor such a law, while 34% are opposed.

By party, 73% of Democrats and 60% of independents favor a law allowing same-sex couples to form a civil union, while 54% of Republicans oppose it.

Acts of Violence

Among Maryland voters, 37% think that the harsh tone of political campaigns contributes to acts of violence in this country, while 58% do not think it does. By party, 50% of Democrats think that the harsh tone of political campaigns contributes to acts of violence, while 84% of Republicans and 58% of independents do not believe that the harsh tone of political campaigns contributes to acts of violence.

Sixty-five percent, however, think that violence portrayed on television, in movies, and in music lyrics contribute to acts of violence in this country, while 31% do not think it does.

Violence portrayed on television, in movies, and in music lyrics contribute by party:

	Yes	**No**
Democrats	67%	27%
Republicans	56%	42%
Independents	74%	20%

QUESTION: *What do you consider the most important issue facing Maryland today?*

MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE	Number	Percent
Economy/jobs	462	57.6 %
Budget deficit	122	15.2 %
Education	64	8.0 %
Taxes	41	5.1 %
Health care	25	3.1 %
Crime/drugs	21	2.6 %
Environment	19	2.4 %
Affordable housing	17	2.1 %
Transportation/roads	8	1.0 %
Illegal immigration	4	0.5 %
No answer	19	2.4 %
Total	802	100.0 %

	MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE			
	Economy/jobs	Taxes	Budget deficit	Education
PARTY AFFILIATION				
Democrat	273 59.6%	13 2.8%	52 11.4%	54 11.8%
Republican	134 55.6%	20 8.3%	58 24.1%	3 1.2%
Independent	55 53.4%	8 7.8%	12 11.7%	7 6.8%

QUESTION: *Do you approve or disapprove of the job Barack Obama is doing as president?*

JOB APPROVAL: BARACK OBAMA	Number	Percent
Approve	434	54.1 %
Disapprove	319	39.8 %
No answer	49	6.1 %
Total	802	100.0 %

	JOB APPROVAL: BARACK OBAMA		
	Approve	Disapprove	No answer
PARTY AFFILIATION			
Democrat	356 77.7%	69 15.1%	33 7.2%
Republican	27 11.2%	204 84.6%	10 4.1%
Independent	51 49.5%	46 44.7%	6 5.8%

	JOB APPROVAL: BARACK OBAMA		
	Approve	Disapprove	No answer
RACE			
White	262 43.7%	304 50.8%	33 5.5%
African-American	166 90.2%	4 2.2%	14 7.6%

	JOB APPROVAL: BARACK OBAMA		
	Approve	Disapprove	No answer
GENDER			
Male	186 48.2%	179 46.4%	21 5.4%
Female	248 59.6%	140 33.7%	28 6.7%

QUESTION: *Do you approve or disapprove of the job Martin O'Malley is doing as governor?*

JOB APPROVAL: MARTIN O'MALLEY	Number	Percent
Approve	462	57.6 %
Disapprove	237	29.6 %
No answer	103	12.8 %
Total	802	100.0 %

	JOB APPROVAL: MARTIN O'MALLEY		
	Approve	Disapprove	No answer
PARTY AFFILIATION			
Democrat	352 76.9%	54 11.8%	52 11.4%
Republican	53 22.0%	151 62.7%	37 15.4%
Independent	57 55.3%	32 31.1%	14 13.6%

	JOB APPROVAL: MARTIN O'MALLEY		
	Approve	Disapprove	No answer
RACE			
White	310 51.8%	210 35.1%	79 13.2%
African-American	139 75.5%	23 12.5%	22 12.0%

	JOB APPROVAL: MARTIN O'MALLEY		
	Approve	Disapprove	No answer
GENDER			
Male	211 54.7%	126 32.6%	49 12.7%
Female	251 60.3%	111 26.7%	54 13.0%

QUESTION: *In general, do you think gun control laws in Maryland should be made more strict, less strict, or kept as they are now?*

GUN CONTROL IN MARYLAND	Number	Percent
More strict	358	44.6 %
Less strict	189	23.6 %
Kept as they are	210	26.2 %
No answer	45	5.6 %
Total	802	100.0 %

	GUN CONTROL IN MARYLAND			
	More strict	Less strict	Kept as they are	No answer
PARTY AFFILIATION				
Democrat	290 63.3%	50 10.9%	95 20.7%	23 5.0%
Republican	23 9.5%	111 46.1%	94 39.0%	13 5.4%
Independent	45 43.7%	28 27.2%	21 20.4%	9 8.7%

	GUN CONTROL IN MARYLAND			
	More strict	Less strict	Kept as they are	No answer
RACE				
White	189 31.6%	175 29.2%	193 32.2%	42 7.0%
African-American	165 89.7%	7 3.8%	11 6.0%	1 0.5%

QUESTION: *Do you favor or oppose the death penalty in Maryland?*

DEATH PENALTY	Number	Percent
Favor	447	55.7 %
Oppose	290	36.2 %
No answer	65	8.1 %
Total	802	100.0 %

	DEATH PENALTY		
	Favor	Oppose	No answer
PARTY AFFILIATION			
Democrat	206	211	41
	45.0%	46.1%	9.0%
Republican	187	40	14
	77.6%	16.6%	5.8%
Independent	54	39	10
	52.4%	37.9%	9.7%

QUESTION: *As a penalty for murder, do you believe that the sentence of life without the possibility of parole is, or is not, an acceptable substitute for the death penalty?*

LIFE WITHOUT PAROLE	Number	Percent
Is acceptable	483	60.2 %
Is not acceptable	262	32.7 %
No answer	57	7.1 %
Total	802	100.0 %

	LIFE WITHOUT PAROLE		
	Is acceptable	Is not acceptable	No answer
PARTY AFFILIATION			
Democrat	311	113	34
	67.9%	24.7%	7.4%
Republican	104	120	17
	43.2%	49.8%	7.1%
Independent	68	29	6
	66.0%	28.2%	5.8%

QUESTION: *Would you favor or oppose a law in Maryland allowing same-sex couples to marry, giving them the same legal rights as heterosexual married couples in areas such as tax exemptions, inheritance and pension coverage?*

MARRIAGE FOR SAME-SEX COUPLES	Number	Percent
Favor	409	51.0 %
Oppose	354	44.1 %
No answer	39	4.9 %
Total	802	100.0 %

	MARRIAGE FOR SAME-SEX COUPLES		
	Favor	Oppose	No answer
PARTY AFFILIATION			
Democrat	297	140	21
	64.8%	30.6%	4.6%
Republican	58	177	6
	24.1%	73.4%	2.5%
Independent	54	37	12
	52.4%	35.9%	11.7%

QUESTION: *Would you favor or oppose a law in Maryland allowing same-sex couples to form a civil union, giving them the same legal rights as heterosexual married couples in areas such as tax exemptions, inheritance and pension coverage?*

CIVIL UNIONS FOR SAME-SEX COUPLES	Number	Percent
Favor	495	61.7 %
Oppose	275	34.3 %
No answer	32	4.0 %
Total	802	100.0 %

	CIVIL UNIONS FOR SAME-SEX COUPLES		
	Favor	Oppose	No answer
PARTY AFFILIATION			
Democrat	333	114	11
	72.7%	24.9%	2.4%
Republican	100	129	12
	41.5%	53.5%	5.0%
Independent	62	32	9
	60.2%	31.1%	8.7%

QUESTION: *Do you believe the harsh tone of political campaigns contributes to acts of violence in this country, or not?*

HARSH TONE OF POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS CONTRIBUTES TO ACTS OF VIOLENCE	Number	Percent
Yes	294	36.7 %
No	465	58.0 %
No answer	43	5.4 %
Total	802	100.0 %

	HARSH TONE OF POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS CONTRIBUTES TO ACTS OF VIOLENCE		
	Yes	No	No answer
PARTY AFFILIATION			
Democrat	229 50.0%	202 44.1%	27 5.9%
Republican	33 13.7%	203 84.2%	5 2.1%
Independent	32 31.1%	60 58.3%	11 10.7%

QUESTION: *Do you believe that violence portrayed on television, in movies, and in music lyrics contribute to acts of violence in this country, or not?*

VIOLENCE ON TV, MOVIES, MUSIC CONTRIBUTE TO ACTS OF VIOLENCE	Number	Percent
Yes	520	64.8 %
No	245	30.5 %
No answer	37	4.6 %
Total	802	100.0 %

	VIOLENCE ON TV, MOVIES, MUSIC CONTRIBUTE TO ACTS OF VIOLENCE		
	Yes	No	No answer
PARTY AFFILIATION			
Democrat	308 67.2%	123 26.9%	27 5.9%
Republican	136 56.4%	101 41.9%	4 1.7%
Independent	76 73.8%	21 20.4%	6 5.8%