

SMOR Louisiana May 2015 Poll

Press Release

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Dilemma -- raising revenue from various sources or massive cuts to state services?

This question posed current news accounts surrounding the choice of either raising revenue from numerous sources or doing nothing and facing drastic reductions in state services particularly to health care and higher education. Raising revenue from lots of sources is preferred by two thirds (67.4%) of Louisiana voters. Only 13.9% of all female voters favor cuts in spending.

Doomsday Scenario

Voters were posed with an “if this legislative session ends without additional revenue” scenario and the resulting consequences of hospitals and state universities partially shutting down, state employee layoffs and a severe downgrading of the state’s credit rating.

An overwhelming majority (78.3%) responded they would feel bad about it; only 3.4% felt such an outcome would be good.

About two thirds (63.8%) of voters think that scenario would have either a lot or some impact on them and their family. Such sentiment was much higher among females (71.1%) than among males (54.2%).

A strong majority (76.3%) think the legislature would have acted irresponsibly if the session ended without additional revenue and the doomsday scenario consequences occurred. A comparable majority (74.1%) think the governor would have acted irresponsibly to allow that to occur.

Governor’s Race

U. S. Senator David Vitter reaches a new high with 38.1% of Louisiana voters picking him as their choice for governor. Vitter’s closest challenger trails by about thirteen points. The only democrat in the race for governor, John Bel Edwards, received 24.6%. Republican Jay Dardenne finishes third with 16.5% and Republican Scott Angelle receives 5.4%. The remaining 15.5% are undecided or wouldn’t say.

Senator Vitter receives 47.1% support among white voters. Vitter is having to contend with a gender gap of about 16 percentage points. Vitter gets 55.6% of white males and 39.2% of white females. The gender gap

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would not prevent him from getting into the runoff because he gets big numbers from white males and enough white females. Another great number for Senator Vitter - only 13.2% of all white voters are still undecided.

Receiving 38.1% of all Louisiana voters and 64.6% of Louisiana republican voters is a big advantage for republican candidate David Vitter over his two republican challengers. Senator Vitter's republican challengers are so far back, Vitter would have to suffer a catastrophic melt down with his white support not to get into the runoff against Democrat John Bel Edwards.

You Pick – next governor: democrat or republican?

Republicans in Louisiana must be the most anti-democrat voters in all fifty states. Less than one percent of male and female republican voters would pick a democrat for governor. Almost seventy percent of all white males would not pick a democrat for governor. Only twenty three percent of white voters would pick a democrat as our next governor. Does that number sound familiar – about the same percentage of white voters Mary Landrieu received last year and the percentage of white voters who give President Obama a positive job rating.

Voters would pick the republican candidate by a margin of 46.8% to the democrat being picked by 38.8%. In a related question in this survey we asked voters “Regardless of how you are registered to vote, do you more often agree with the actions of democrats or republicans?”. 47.8% of voters say they more often agree with republicans while 37.4% say they agree more often with democrats. SMOR's December 2014 survey showed the anti-democrat sentiment is based on politics of national Democrats in D.C.

Governor Bobby Jindal -- Job Performance

Another year of budget deficits and additional reductions to state services continues to take its toll on Governor Jindal's popularity with Louisiana voters. Governor Bobby Jindal's job performance rating is at an all time low. He receives a 31.8% positive job performance rating from Louisiana voters. The Southern Media & Opinion Research Survey in December 2014 had Governor Jindal with a 40.9% positive job rating. Jindal's negative job rating was 57.6% in December 2014 and today stands at 64.7%. Governor Jindal's excellent job performance rating fell from 10.4% last December to 4.6% in this latest survey. Jindal's latest decline comes primarily from his republican base. Republican voter's barely gave him a higher positive job ratings with 53.5% than negative 44.1%. The September 2012 Southern Media & Opinion Research Survey showed Bobby Jindal with a 78.3% positive job rating from republicans with 27.1 of those percentage points being an excellent job rating.

President Barack Obama -- Job Performance

President Barack Obama remains unpopular in Louisiana, but not as unpopular as Governor Jindal. 42.1% rate his job performance as positive and 57.3% negative. Only 22.6% of white voters give President Barack Obama a positive job rating. ***Twenty three percent appears to be the upper end of white support for democrats at the statewide level in Louisiana.***

State Treasurer John Kennedy -- Job Performance

State Treasurer John Kennedy appears to be the most popular statewide elected official in Louisiana. As in most surveys, John Kennedy receives positive job performance numbers from black voters because of his name. If he were to run for the U.S. Senate as a republican, he could probably not count on more than eight percent of the black vote.

Same-sex Marriages

A slight majority (52.4%) of voters oppose gay marriages. Among republican voters, 71.6% oppose gay marriages. White voters oppose gay marriage by 56.3% to 32.5%. North Louisiana is the area of highest opposition at 61.2%. Voters who are under 35 years of age are the only demographic group that has majority (51.8%) support for gay marriage.

“Religious Freedom Restoration Act”

A slight majority (50.9%) oppose legislation creating a law that would allow people to refuse to provide business services for a same-sex marriage event or ceremony. Whites are split (44.5% favor and 45.9% oppose) while 63.1% of black voters oppose such a law. Republicans are the only demographic group with a majority (57.1%) in support of such a law.

Common Core

Three of the four candidates for governor oppose Common Core standards and this survey spells out why. The majority (53.6%) of Louisiana voters oppose the use of Common Core standards in Louisiana. Louisiana being one of the reddest states in recent elections finds only 18.8% of republican voters supporting Common Core. A whopping 68.5% of republican voters oppose Common Core. 58.5% percent of all white voters oppose the use of Common Core standards in Louisiana. Democrats were closely split on the support of Common Core. Black voters were the only demographic group supporting common core, but their support did not reach fifty percent.

TOPS

TOPS remains very popular with Louisiana voters and current legislation to limit TOPS is not popular with voters. Almost two-thirds (64.2%) favor TOPS to remain fully funded and 27.8% favor limiting the amount of money the state can spend on TOPS.

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SMOR LOUISIANA POLL, MAY 2015

Frequency Responses—based on a survey of 600 likely Louisiana voters,
conducted May 5 - 9, 2015; Totals may not equal 100% due to rounding

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- The Louisiana state government is today facing a massive \$1.6 billion deficit and the state legislature has just a few weeks to come up with a balanced budget. The state legislature is considering raising additional revenue from lots of different sources such as increasing fees for government services, raising taxes on cigarettes, reducing the amount of money state government pays out for special interest industries, and reducing certain corporate tax exemptions.

If the state legislature does not raise additional revenue, it will have to lay off state employees and make severe cuts in funding to your local hospital, health care services and the state university in your area.

Which do you want the legislature to do: raise revenue from lots of different sources or lay off state employees and make severe cuts in funding?

RAISE REVENUE FROM LOTS OF DIFFERENT SOURCES	67.4
LAYOFF STATE EMPLOYEES AND MAKE SEVERE CUTS IN FUNDING	17.4
(VOLUNTEERED RESPONSE: COMBINATION OF BOTH)	3.6
(DNK/WS)	11.6

- If this legislative session ends in a few weeks without additional revenue, it will result in hospitals and state universities partially shutting down, state employees being laid off and a severe downgrading of the state’s credit ratings. If this actually did happen:

How would you feel about it; good, bad or indifferent (neither good or bad)?	GOOD.....	3.4
	BAD	78.3
	INDIFFERENT	16.0
	(DNK/WS).....	2.3

If this actually did happen:

Do you think it would affect you and your family a lot, some, a little or not at all?	A LOT.....	36.4
	SOME	27.4
	A LITTLE.....	17.5
	NOT AT ALL	16.8
	(DNK/WS).....	1.9

If this actually did happen:

Do you think the state legislature would have acted responsibly or irresponsibly?	RESPONSIBLY	14.9
	IRRESPONSIBLY	76.3
	(DNK/WS).....	8.7

If this actually did happen:

Do you think the governor would have acted responsibly or irresponsibly?	RESPONSIBLY	17.1
	IRRESPONSIBLY	74.1
	(DNK/WS).....	8.9

- If the election for Governor were held today between Republican Scott Angelle, Republican Jay Dardenne, Democrat John Bel Edwards and Republican David Vitter, for whom would you vote?

SCOTT ANGELLE	5.4
JAY DARDENNE	16.5
JOHN BEL EDWARDS.....	24.6
DAVID VITTER	38.1
(UNDEC/DNK/WS)	15.5

- If you had to pick between the next Governor of Louisiana being a Democrat or being a Republican, which would you pick?

DEMOCRAT	38.8
REPUBLICAN.....	46.8
(DNK/WS).....	14.4

- Please tell me if you think the following officials are doing an excellent, good, not so good or poor job?

	<u>EXCELLENT</u>	<u>GOOD</u>	<u>NOT SO GOOD</u>	<u>POOR</u>	<u>(NOT FAMIL /DNK/WS)</u>
• Governor Bobby Jindal	4.6	27.2	26.1	38.6	3.4
• President Barack Obama.....	14.4	27.7	17.5	39.8	0.5
• State Treasurer John Kennedy	14.6	46.2	13.1	6.3	19.7

- Do you support or oppose allowing same-sex couples to get married?

SUPPORT.....	34.1
OPPOSE.....	52.4
(DNK/WS).....	13.5

- Do you support or oppose a law that would allow people to refuse to provide business services for a same-sex marriage event or ceremony if they had religious objections to such marriages?

SUPPORT.....	38.4
OPPOSE.....	50.9
(DNK/WS).....	10.7

- Louisiana adopted Common Core which are standards for reading, writing and math for students in Kindergarten through 12th grade. Do you support or oppose the use of the Common Core standards in Louisiana?

SUPPORT.....	34.7
OPPOSE.....	53.6
(DNK/WS).....	11.7

- TOPS is a state government program that pays in-state college tuition for students that graduate from a Louisiana high school and meet certain academic requirements. The amount of money the state spends each year on TOPS is going up as the cost of tuition to attend state colleges and universities goes up. In your opinion, should the legislature limit the amount of money the state can spend on TOPS which means it may not cover the full cost of tuition or should TOPS be fully funded for students who qualify?

LIMIT THE AMOUNT OF MONEY STATE CAN SPEND ON TOPS	27.8
TOPS BE FULLY FUNDED FOR STUDENTS WHO QUALIFY.....	64.2
(DNK/WS).....	8.0

- Are registered to vote as a Democrat, Republican or some other way?

DEMOCRAT	50.2
REPUBLICAN.....	32.9
OTHER.....	16.9

- Regardless of how you are registered to vote, do you more often agree with the actions of Democrats or Republicans?

DEMOCRATS	37.4
REPUBLICANS.....	47.8
(NEITHER).....	8.7
(DNK/WS).....	6.0

- What is your age? (Are you under 35, between 35 and 49, between 50 and 64; or 65 or over?)

UNDER 35	15.3
35 – 49	23.8
50 – 64	33.8
65 OR OVER	26.6
(DNK/WS).....	0.5

- (Record sex by observation.)

MALE.....	43.2
FEMALE	56.8

- (Record race from voter record).

WHITE	67.8
BLACK.....	29.1
OTHER.....	3.2

- (COMBINED RACE RESPONSES)

WHITE/OTHER	70.9
BLACK.....	29.1

- Is the approximate annual income for all people in your household over \$100,000, under \$50,000, or somewhere in between?

UNDER \$50,000	26.7
SOMEWHERE IN-BETWEEN	41.3
OVER \$100,000.....	22.8
(DNK/WS)	9.2

SMOR Louisiana Poll

May 2015

ABOUT THE POLL

This statewide poll was developed and conducted by Southern Media & Opinion Research, Inc., and funded by private subscribers.

Professional interviewers completed interviews by telephone with 600 Louisiana likely voters. The interviews for this statewide poll were conducted from Tuesday, May 5, through Saturday, May 9, 2015.

The overall margin of error for the statewide statistics obtained from the survey data is not greater than plus or minus 4.0 percentage points at the 95% level of confidence. In other words, there is a 95% certainty that the statistics presented from the results obtained on this survey of 600 likely voters statewide will not be more than 4.0 percentage points above or below the figure that would be obtained if all of the likely voters in the state would have been interviewed.

The sample error may be larger for subgroup responses based on attitudinal, demographic and geographic variables. There are other sources of potential error which cannot be calculated including question wording and order of question presentation.

Telephone numbers were selected at random from a sample frame of telephoned, likely Louisiana voter households. Both landline and cellular telephone numbers were included in the sample frame. Cellular telephone numbers were dialed by hand in compliance with FCC regulations.

Respondents were assigned to one of four geographic areas based on their parish of residence. The four geographic areas along with the parishes comprising those areas are:

New Orleans metropolitan area, (includes Jefferson, Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, St. Charles, St. John the Baptist, St. Tammany and Washington parishes); **Florida-River Parishes**, (includes Ascension, Assumption, East Baton Rouge, East Feliciana, Iberville, Livingston, Pointe Coupee, St. Helena, St. James, Tangipahoa, West Baton Rouge and West Feliciana parishes); **Acadiana-southwest**, (includes Acadia, Allen, Avoyelles, Beauregard, Calcasieu, Cameron, Evangeline, Iberia, Jefferson Davis, Lafayette, Lafourche, St. Landry, St. Martin, St. Mary, Terrebonne and Vermilion parishes); **North Louisiana**, (includes Bienville, Bossier, Caddo, Caldwell, Catahoula, Claiborne, Concordia, DeSoto, East Carroll, Franklin, Grant, Jackson, LaSalle, Lincoln, Madison, Morehouse, Natchitoches, Ouachita, Rapides, Red River, Richland, Sabine, Tensas, Union, Vernon, Webster, West Carroll and Winn parishes).

A statistical weighting procedure was employed to normalize the sample to the likely voter population based on voter political party affiliation and age category. The percentages shown in the tables are weighted. Counts within tables are unweighted counts. The count of cases used in computation of subset statistics (using the format $n=xxx$) presented under the relevant crosstabulation tables are unweighted counts of cases used to generate the statistics in those tables.