



CONTACT: Chris Dudley
Vice President for Administration
336-841-4530; cdudley@highpoint.edu

HPU'S SURVEY RESEARCH CENTER FINDS NC RESIDENTS CONTINUE TO FAVOR REPUBLICANS; EQUALLY SOUR ON NC AND NATIONAL ECONOMIES; HAVE STRONG OPINIONS ON EDUCATION POLICY

HIGH POINT, N.C., Oct. 20, 2010 – In a poll released today, the High Point University Survey Research Center announced a few key findings – not only do North Carolina residents still lean Republican in the upcoming congressional elections, but they are also equally pessimistic about the state and national economies. Residents also have differing and distinct views on education policies, such as lengthening the academic school year and providing additional pay to teachers who choose to teach in low-performing schools.

The Center reports that several findings indicating the congressional elections continue to tilt toward Republicans. Some Republican support is likely the result of continuing negative perceptions of the North Carolina and national economies and falling approval for President Obama in several policy areas.

Results include:

- Republicans continue to have a small – though not statistically significant – advantage in a generic ballot question regarding party preference with 43 percent of respondents choosing the Republican Party candidate for the U.S. House of Representatives and 39 percent choosing the Democratic Party candidate; 15 percent were undecided.
- Fifty-six percent of respondents said that economic conditions in the country as a whole were getting worse, and 58 percent said the same about the economic conditions in the state of North Carolina. A previous survey in March of 578 adults by the Survey Research Center found 47 percent of North Carolinians felt that economic conditions in the country as a whole were getting worse, but 56 percent thought economic conditions in North Carolina were getting worse.
- Overall approval for President Obama has fallen from 48 percent in April to 39 percent in October. In policy areas such as the threat of terrorism and the economy, support for the job President Obama is doing has fallen from 50 to 42 percent and 36 to 30 percent, respectively.

“North Carolinians now have similarly pessimistic views of the prospects for the state and national economies,” says Dr. Sadie Leder, assistant director of the Survey Research Center. “That is yet another

sign that North Carolinians will arrive at the voting booth with less positive views of the national economy than they had even a few months ago.”

The survey also probed respondents about their opinions on several education policy issues:

- North Carolinians registered their disbelief that either extending the school day (74 percent to 21 percent) or lengthening the school year alone (59 percent to 35 percent) will increase student achievement in the public schools.
- North Carolinians do support increased pay for highly qualified teachers who choose to teach in low-performing schools by a margin of 74 percent to 21 percent.

“There is relatively widespread agreement among North Carolinians about some of the education policy proposals we have heard lately,” says Martin Kifer, Director of the High Point University Survey Research Center. “Many people like increased teacher pay for working in low performing schools, but a similar fraction don’t think that lengthening the school day will make a difference.”

The survey was conducted Oct. 9-14, and responses came from 351 adults with landline telephones in North Carolina selected by a Random Digit Dial (RDD) method, giving the survey a margin of sampling error of approximately 5.3 percentage points.

Full results and methodological details from the survey and can be found at the Survey Research Center website, <http://src.highpoint.edu/>, or from Dr. Martin Kifer, the center’s director, at mkifer@highpoint.edu or 336-841-9333.

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